

A
FUNERAL SERMON
UPON THE
DEATH
OF

Mr. JOSEPH BARRETT,

Son of the Reverend Mr. John Barret Minister of the Gospel in Nottingham.

Preached Aug. 30th. By J. W. Junior, One of the Ministers of that Congregation of which Mr. Joseph Barrett was an eminent Member.

To which is added,

An Account of his *Holy Life*, his *Evidences*, *Experiences*, *Holy Resolves*, *Divine Meditations*, and his *constant Course of Self-Examination*. Being Part of an exact *Diary* written by his own Hand.

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TO THE
Christian Reader.

THE *Sermon* here presented to Thee, was Preached (though not without some disadvantages from an infirm State of Health, some straits of Time, and too plain straitness of Spirit, yet) under some Advantage from the speakingness of the Providence to such as knew this excellent Person, and so could not but be affected with his Death. And the Iron being hot, a weaker Arm might with Gods Blessing be sufficient to make some Impression, and meaner Attempts might meet with some Success with a People used to, and so more easily inclined to pass by, the Infirmities of the Preacher; especially, when (as here it was) they were alarmed and affected with such an awful Providence. But this Advantage, I am sensible, will be much lost in the Publishing of it. Now it must appear among Strangers and a Critical World, to be sure, in their Reading it will Notifie more Defects in it than the

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Candid People, it was Preached to, did in their hearing it, This Consideration, together with a just Sense of my inability to add any Thing to the Churches Treasure of Printed helps, had effectually prevented the Churches being troubled with this, but that I could not prevail for the Papers of this Eminent Servant of God's seeing the Light, without this mean Composure to introduce them; and I would not set up any of my own Concerns in Competition with the Honour of Jesus Christ, and the good of Souls, which I really hope the Publishing of these Papers may considerably promote: Rather than obstruct these great Ends, which all in their several Places are bound to their utmost to forward. I am willing to discover my weakness, to expose, yea, rejoice in my Infirmities. If the chief of all the Apostles stuck not to do so, much less must sorry I, if I may but any way advance the blessed Jesus's Honour and Interest, and the welfare of precious Souls. Many Instances of Weakness I am very apprehensive this short Sermon may be chargeable with, but however I am easie as upon the Account just now mention'd, so because I hope weakness is the worst that it hath to Answer for. Having
such

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such good Vouchers (as these his own Papers are) for all that it has Asserted of this good Man, it must be cleared from those great Crimes of Falshood and Flattery, which otherwise it might with some possibly, have lain under the Censure of. For the Power of Godliness (alas!) is run so low, even in the professing World at this Day, through the Infection of a corrupt Age, and the strange Affectation of Conformity and Approaches to it; and there are so few Instances comparatively of a Christianly Couragious, and truly noble spirited Contempt of a vain and sinful World, a swimming strongly against its Stream, and a close walking with God, that to commend a Person for Eminency in these without a very plain and particular Evidence produced in Proof of it; will be suspected of Partiality and Flattery: Things that Funeral-Encomiums have been very grossly abused to, with very mischievous Effects; and so many of these having been really Guilty, have been ready to bring even the Innocent under a Suspicion. But I hope, the perusal of these Papers will clear me from such a Charge, and satisfie you that were before Strangers to this Eminent Servant of God (as his well ballasted, and well-backed Zeal, his

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shining Conversation and uniform Holiness satisfied my self and all else that had the Happiness to know him) that I had a good Warrant and clear Call for the Liberty I took here (against my usual Practice) to speak so much of him. Seriously peruse these Papers which shew so much of the gracious workings of his Heart, through God's working upon it, and then I may safely Appeal to Thee, whether more might not have been said without the least intrenching upon Truth; and whether less could have been said without withholding a requisite Testimony to the eminent Work of God's Spirit, and without doing Prejudice to others, by concealing such an useful, quickning Pattern.

Here we have a very lively Instance of the Reality and Excellency of Christianity to the Confutation of that daring Atheism, or (which is the same thing under a more specious Name, though too poor and thin a cover to hide its Nakedness) *Deism*, that to our extream shame and Danger swarms so much in our Land of Light. It was in Christ's School that he learnt those excellent Lessons which render'd him so lovely and useful; that steady Piety, concern for God's Honour, and opera-

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operative Pitty for, and Charity to poor Souls. He had truly learnt Christ, that made him so accurate in these Lessons. Here we may see that Religion is more than a Name, no Melancholick or idle Fancy, no unactive, unuseful Speculation; much less a prejudicial, carnally-designing, self-ended Thing, as a loose malignant World too often represents and slanderously charges it, out of their wretched Enmity to the blessed God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the Author and Object of it: And as a pittiful, but horrible Revenge upon it, for the just shame it fixes upon their looseness and impieties.

From the Instance here produced, we may discern what real and excellent Effects the Grace of the Gospel, that stupendious Grace which brings Salvation requires, directs to, and works, such as, thorow active Holiness, constant Self-Inspection, universal Circumspection, much pains with the Heart, much spirituality, and delightful Converse with Heaven, driving a great Trade thither, even in the Management of other Trades and particular Callings, and in the midst of much earthly Business. Once more, here we have a clear Refutation of that gross Charge the World brings against Religion, that the

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Things it commands are impossible, its Yoke intolerably heavy; here is an Instance that Gospel-Holiness, through the rich and powerful Grace of the Lord Jesus, the strong aids of the Spirit insured in the New Covenant, is very feasible, and most pleasant, practised with the greatest Delight.

One Thing is fit to be remarked here, which was (as indeed several remarkable Things were) omitted in the Sermon. It is known to many that several Years since, by the Advice and at the Charge of several worthy Persons, whose Hearts God stirred up, there was a new Impression of that excellent Treatise of Mr. *Joseph Allein's* about Conversion, in a lesser Character, and at a low Rate, that so it might be within the reach of more Person's Purses, and come into more Hands: Of these he dispersed Fourscore and Ten Dozen, without making any Profit of it to himself, sincerely aiming at the good of Souls in bringing them off from their Sins, and out of themselves to a sound closure with Christ, which that Book was so well suited, and I hope has been eminently blessed unto. His Remark at the Foot of the Account of his disposal of these Books is methinks very observable, both for the Zeal, for
Christ's

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Christ's Honour in the increase of his Subjects, which his Heart was so set upon, and for his great Humility and low Thoughts of himself, it doth with such Emphasis express. *Blessed be God, says he, that has intrusted this little Job of Work for Christ in my unworthy Hands.*

And now, *Christian Reader*, though I might detain Thee much longer, in relating very quickning exemplary Passages of, and making Remarks upon, this eminently Holy Man; yet I shall forbear, and only Request Thee to join thy Prayers with mine, *That the Sovereign God would graciously be pleased to stay this sore Hand of his that hath of late pulled up so many Stakes in our Fence, some eminent Ministers, and some solid, singularly active and useful Christians, and with this Aggravation, that several of these, both in City and Countrey, have been taken off in the Prime of their Days and Service; That he would make up these sore Breaches by pouring forth abundantly of that residue of the blessed Spirit, he hath with himself, upon those that are left, and raise up many as it were, out of the Ashes of them that are gone, and that in order hereunto he would bless all the good Examples, Counsels, and Directions such have left behind them, and in particular this fair Copy here produced*

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*to the strengthening, directing, quickning and
incouraging of others ; That as this righteous
Abel though Dead yet speaks, so he may
actually Live amongst us still, in many close
Followers ; and these his remains may by
Gods Blessing be instrumental to raise some,
yea many dead Souls, as Elisha's Bones were
once to raise a dead Body to Life. And
when thou art on thy Knees at the Throne
of Grace on these Errands, shut not him
out of thy fervent Remembrances, who
earnestly Desires them, and needs them
more than most as being,*

*One of the weakest Labourers in
our blessed Lord's Vineyard,*

*Not. Apr.
11. 1699.*

J. W. Junior.

Christian

Christian Reader,

THE Holy and Blessed Scriptures tells us, The Memory of the Just is Blessed, therefore though the Commendation of Deceased Persons is too much abused, and is not ordinarily to be used; yet where there hath been eminency of Holiness, it is not only lawful but very useful and requisite, to bring their Holy Examples to view, to stir up others to be Followers of them, as they have been of Christ. And this is the present Case, and the Cause of Publishing the Funeral Sermon Preached at the Interment of that Eminently, Holy, Humble, Active and Zealous Servant of Christ Mr. Joseph Barrett, whose Death is a great Loss to our Congregation, and to the Church of God in general. And it was thought very expedient, together with the Sermon, to Publish some Things of his left under his own Hand (Penned for his own Private Use, and for the help of his after him, though God hath now ordered it that they shall be of further Use than his extraordinary Humility would have admitted) who while Living, would be prevailed with to communicate them to very few.) You have here a Relation of a considerable Part of his Life, of Gods early beginning with him, and carrying on his Work, as the shining Light, more and more to the End of his Life, which though but short comparatively, was very well improved for the great Purposes of Life, the Glory of God, and the good of his own, and many others Souls.

You have here also his Evidences, Experiences, his Holy Resolves, and several Holy and Divine
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Meditations, and some other Things; though, that the Book might not swell to too great a bulk, there are several Things left out, tending to the answering many practical and important Questions, besides some other Papers that might be very useful. And truly I have often thought, that had God seen good, it had been very desirable, that he had been brought up for the Work of the Ministry: Some Discouragements there were, as his being troubled with much Pain in his Head, and Weakness in his Sight, being though so Young, brought to need the help of Spectacles, and his Voice, though clear and distinct, was but low: You will find in one of these Papers, that he met with some considerable Exercise of Spirit from a strong Inclination towards the Work of the Ministry, after he had begun to be engaged otherwise; though you will find that he was, and how he was satisfied to this Particular.

*What you may perceive of the Frame of his Spirit in these Papers, as well as what is said of him in the Sermon, will let you see how early, and how much he was devoted to God and his Service, how much he laid out himself for God, of what a Publick Spirit he was, and how indefatigable he was in promoting what ever might tend to his Glory, and the Salvation of Souls. And also in keeping up Communion with God, and the Exercise of Grace in reference to his own Soul, so that he neglected not to keep his own Vineyard. Besides, those good designs of dispersing good Books, and furthering the Preaching of the Gospel where there was most need, sparing no Pains about it in frequent Journeys to settle Matters, largely contributing himself, and improving his Interest in others, for the promoting of it; these two were much upon his Heart, the setting up Societies for Reformation of Manners in
many*

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many Places, and setting up among Private Christians by themselves alone, a Weekly Hour for Prayer, for the Church and Nation, especially during the Time of the sitting of Parliaments, as appears by his many Letters both to Ministers and Private Christians, of which there are Copy's of above an Hundred and Thirty, most of them relating to these Subjects, though there are some to Christians about his own and their Soul-concerns.

And by all these Things you may see he was a Man given to Prayer, and much in Meditation, and Self-Examination, those Soul-enriching, and Soul-fatening Duties, as Mr. Robert Bolton used to call them.

Upon all these Considerations many have thought these Papers fit to be Published, with whom I heartily Concur, judging they may be very useful for all Christians, and a Spur to Imitation, especially to Tradesmen that have much to do in the World, and so are too apt to neglect Religious Duties, Publick, Family, and Secret, and Inward, Heart-Duties: Here they have before them an Instance, that a gracious spiritual Heart, that is thoroughly set upon, and bound for God, Christ, Holiness and Heaven, may by the help of God's Spirit, directing and enabling him to a due redeeming and improvement of Time, (notwithstanding much worldly Business, and due Diligence in his Particular Calling, in which this good Man was not defective) keep up much inward Communion with God, and be useful in his Place for the good of others, both as to the Publick, and to the Souls and Body's of Particular Persons. Which I wish many that are in the main godly, were not too defective in, suffering their worldly Business and particular Callings, to hinder and interfere with their general Calling. I shall add no more,

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more, but my humble Praises to God for his raising up such a Member amongst us, lending him to us any Time, furnishing him with such choice Talents, and inclining him to use them in this way of penning down the gracious workings of his Heart, and that in long Hand, whereby this fore Breach in his Death is somewhat repaired, by his being thus made useful still; yea, and to some that were not within the reach of his advantageous Acquaintance and Converse while he lived. That this may through the Blessing of the Spirit of Grace, be the remarkable Effects of the Publishing these Papers, in all that shall Read them, is the hearty Desire and earnest Prayer of him that is

Your Soul-Friend and Servant,

Jo. Whitlock, Senior.

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(1)

A
FUNERAL SERMON
ON THE
DEATH
OF
Mr. *Joseph Barret*, &c.

ACTS VIII. II.

And devout Men carried Stephen to his Burial, and made great Lamentation over him.

WHEN we were last before God in this Place, on such a sad occasion as this (now a Month ago) little did I suspect, that the removal of this so eminent Servant of God, would have been the next occasion for renewal of our Tears, that his Death would have been the next Call to this solemn sorrowful Work. I had hoped, that God would have been graciously pleased to let such a young Tree, laden with Fruit, and in the Prime of its fruitfulness to have stood a
B great

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great while yet; but the all-wise God knows best what he hath to do; the Sovereign God may manage his Orchard, Plant and Transplant, set and pull up as he pleases; and when he comes nearest us, (as here he hath come very near us) we must be highly sensible of his Hand, but yet humbly silent and quiet under it. I see our Pulpit must be in Mourning still! It is but six Months since, that God did both by his Word and Providence call you from, *Numb. 16. 46. To take Fire from the Altar, put on Incense, and run in quickly, get Atonement made, and take up the Controversie, because the Plague was begun.*

The Thing aimed at, is the going out of the Hand of the Lord against us in this Place by the Death of the Reverend Mr. *William Reynolds*, one of the Three ejected out of their Publick Ministry here in 1662. who Died *Feb. 26th. 1697.* Blessed be God, it hath not yet spread to any more of your Three, you have Two of them left still, *viz. Mr. John Whitlock, Senior,* and Mr. *John Barret*, and may you still long have so! but Death has reached and swept away another of your Four Aged Ministers, that God had blessed you with, Mr. *William Cross*, an Aged Ejected Minister, who though not standing in a Pastoral Relation to this Congregation, yet frequently laboured amongst them; it has parted Stakes, and taken half, and left you but half. And now Judgment hath again broke out in the House of God, we have a sore breach upon us again, and next to a Breach upon the Ministry it self.

Therefore I reckon it proper to set before you, the Primitive Christians Practice in the
Text:

Text: Judging that what was their Work then, should be ours now: Lamentation is one Thing, and a great one that God loudly calls to by his Providence, and an eminent way of expressing an humble awful Sense of, and suitable Carriage towards this sore and speaking Dispensation. It's true, this is not the only way of improving and suitably carrying towards it: The fighting the good Fight, running the Christian Race, and keeping the Faith (which this good Servant and Soldier of Jesus Christ was so eminent for) God doth, and Ministers should, call you to a following of him in, as ever you would obtain the Crown of Righteousness which he hath now got; But this possibly may hereafter be urged upon you, for as the proper improvement of such a Providence is large and should be continued long, so it requires more than one Hour to be spent by the Ministry upon such a stroke, duely to direct and press you to a becoming Carriage under it. But for the present Hour I shall take it up, with this Particular of our manifold Duty, this of great Lamentation; and have chosen this Text I have read to you, to press it upon you from. And I think we have as near a Parallel to the occasion in the Text for great Lamentation, as most that could be found amongst us, one full of Faith, and of the Holy Spirit, and of Zeal for God, as *Stephen* was.

I may not detain you in the History of *Stephen*, nor stay in remarking what his Office was in the Church; how eminent he was in it, and how God honoured him for it, setting upon his Head the first of any in the Gospel-Church, that peculiarly Rich and sparkling Crown of Martyrdom: Here you may notice too, how

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vilely the *Jews* by Subordination did Convict him, and with a barbarous Rage put him to Death: When they could not stand against the Truth he spoke, and the Wisdom he defended it with, they stop their Ears, and more like Bruits than Men, run upon and Murder him; the usual Sign and Method of a desperate Cause and its Managers: When they are quite overcome, at the right Weapons, Truth and Strength of Reason, then they have recourse to Noise and Violence: These must help them out, and give them the Day.

And once more; We have a sad Instance here, in these *Jews*, of the wretched Issue of Convictions, not rightly entertained, but managed by a corrupt obstinate Heart. *They were cut to the Heart*, Acts 7. 54. The Phrase seems not much different from that *Acts 2. 37 They were pricked in their Heart*; but the Thing was vastly different. Those had their Hearts touched, and the Light let in upon them was imbraced, but these, though they were Convinced, and their Consciences were touched, yet their Wills and Affections were not; they Sin and Rage the more against the Light: Their Corruptions are the more outrageous for their Convictions: And so it is usually where Convictions are not thankfully taken to and improved, but stomacked at, and resisted. I could not therefore, but as I went along take Notice of this hint the Context gives us, and warn you to have a Care of such Sinning. See that you cherish and be influenced by the Convictions and Admonitions of Conscience; Sin not against them, for that will indanger your being judicially hardened, and left to your own wretched Hearts, so as in a most

most bare-faced violent manner to trample Conscience, and so make the Breach between you and it, yea, between you and its Master, so wide as never to be repaired. But for these Things, I refer you to the two foregoing Chapters, where they lie obvious before you. We are not at present concerned in the Occasion and Manner of his Death, but that which we are now called, specially to attend to for our Direction and Imitation is, the becoming carriage of the Christians at *Jerusalem* towards *Stephen* when Dead, and the Text sets it out to us in two Instances.

First, Their Care about a decent interring of him.

Secondly, Their great Lamentation for the loss of him.

First, Their Care about the decent interring of him. *Devout Men carried Stephen to his Burial*. This is a Duty owing to departed Saints, in Honour to Christ, whom they belong, and are still united to, even in their Dead and Mouldring Bodies; and in Honour to that Cordial Doctrine, and fundamental Truth of Christianity, so clearly and comfortably revealed, and undeniably proved in the Gospel, the Doctrine of the Resurrection. The World often makes a great stir (to a plain excess, and without any good ground) in their Funerals: They bestow a great deal of Honour upon the Bodies of those, whose Souls as they were vile, and Christless, and Graceless here, so are now hopeless and helpless and unspeakably miserable in the other World, in the infernal Dungeon, and these

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pampered Bodies, that were vilely used here; are like to be raised again at the End of the World, most vile Bodies indeed with Marks of God's Displeasure, yea Vengeance upon them, with Horrour, and Ghaſtlineſs, and Trembling. The World has no ground for its pompous Funerals from the Doctrine of the Reſurrection: There will be ſuch a thing; but that is no good News to them, but matter of Terror and Torment: They ſhall riſe again, they ſhall have their old Bodies reſtored to them, but in a ſad Manner and for a ſad End; they ſhall be Veſſels of Wrath greatly widened in their Capacities, and yet all of theſe filled to the brim with the Fury of the Lord with the hot Diſpleaſure, the fiery Indignation of a ſlighted, abuſed Jeſus, that Lamb of God, now become a fierce and rending Lion to them. Their Senſes ſhall all be then more lively than ever, but ſhall have none of thoſe pleaſing Objects to Converſe with, that formerly they ſo diſhonoured God, and debaſed and defiled themſelves by: But quite the contrary, the ſtench and pain of Fire and Brimſtone ſhall they for ever ſuffer, the diſmalneſs of the Chains of Everlaſting Darkneſs, uttermoſt Darkneſs, that hath no Light but what ſcorching Flames give. In a Word, miſerable Bodies ſhall be re-united to miſerable Souls, ſo to make the Miſery of both the greater, and mutually to increaſe each other's Torment, as they have here been mutually helpers to one another in Sin.

But with Believers it's quite otherwiſe. They have a moſt comfortable concern in the Doctrine of the Reſurrection: The Spirit of God who now dwells in them, their Souls and Bo-

Bodies too, will raise even their Bodies to a glorious Immortality, *Rom.* 8. 11. Christ will bring all those with him, whose Bodies now sleep in him; for it is only that part of them that sleeps at Death, their Souls do not, they immediately pass into Glory, enter into their Harvest of Eternal Joy, *2 Cor.* 5. 1, — 8. *Phil.* 1. 23. As the Souls of the Wicked at the Death of the Body as soon as they have finished their Wretched Seed-time, of sowing to the Flesh, do reap their Crop of Eternal Misery, *Acts* 1. 25. That Traitor Judas is gone to his own Place, and those vile Sodomites are now Suffering the Vengeance of Eternal Fire, *Jude* 7. and those final Unbelievers, and obstinate Impenitents in Noah's Time, are said to be now in Prison, *1 Pet.* 3. 19. But I may not now turn aside to meet with, and shew in its proper Colours, that unreasonable, unscriptural, antiscritptural Notion of the Souls sleeping, or wandring, or fluttering in an uncertain imperfect State, till the Day of Judgment. The thing I was asserting is, that Christ at the last Day, will bring all those with him, whose Bodies now sleep in him. He pledges his own Resurrection for this, *1 Thes.* 4. 14. and very largely in, *1 Cor.* 15. *He will change their vile Bodies, and make them like to his most glorious Body by his Infinite Power,* *Phil.* 3. 21. *They have been the Temples of the Holy Ghost, and the Spirit hath dwelt in them,* *1 Cor.* 3. 16. And he will own the Temple he has dwelt and been Worshipped in so eminently. Believers glorified God with their Bodies, as well as Souls; yielded them Living Holy Sacrifices to his Honour, Instruments of Righteousness unto Holiness, and did him faithful Service with them, and God will of his

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Free-Grace glorifie them. And sure then, we may and should (though not with the Papists idolize, and so really abuse and dishonour their Remains, yet) express our Honour of their Persons, in a solemn decent conveying their Dead Bodies to the Grave, so to shew our firm Faith of, and give God the Glory of that most reviving Doctrine of the Believers glorious Resurrection.

When the World expresses so much Honour to Wicked Men without any Desert or Ground, even to such who Lived and Died, dishonourers of, and Enemies to God, and whom God therefore is resolved to pour Contempt, yea Wrath upon, is it not Pitty that Covenant-dust should not be decently laid up in the Bosom of its Mother-Earth? That the Bodies of Believers should not with Solemnity and Honour be carried to their long (but, Blessed be God, not their Everlasting) Home, seeing Christ is so choice of them, and he is resolved to put so much Honour on them in the view of the whole World, and to all Eternity?

But though our Text led us thus to touch at, yet I intend not further to stay upon, nor at present Launch into this large Doctrine of the Believer's Happy Resurrection, nor shall say any more to the solemn honourable Interment of their Bodies, as a Duty resulting from the Prospect of that their glorious Resurrection. The thing I mainly had in my Eye in pitching upon this Text is.

Secondly, The other Instance of the Christians becoming Carriage toward Dead Stephen, viz. Their making great Lamentation over him.
Not

Not for him properly on Account of any Loss he sustained, he was no Loser, but an unconceivable Gainer, even by this violent, and to outward Appearance, untimely Death; he was got to the Goal, and got possessed of the Crown, the sooner by it; but they lamented over him, for the great loss they sustained by his being removed from them. Now the Doctrine, that from these Words upon the present sad Occasion I would take up the remainder of this Hour, is this.

Doct. It hath been the constant Practice of God's People, and is the Duty of all, to be greatly affected with the Death of good, but especially of eminently good Men.

1. This hath been the Practice of God's People. Thus in *Jacobs Case*, Gen. 50. 10. *They mourned for him with a great and very sore Lamentation: Thus Israel mourned for Aaron*, Numb. 20. 29. *When all the Congregation saw that Aaron was dead they mourned for him Thirty Days, even all the House of Israel.* And so they did for *Moses*, Deut. 34. 8. and for *Samuel*, 1 Sam. 25. 1. They made solemn Mourning for him, a large Funeral; *all the Isralites were gathered together and lamented him.* And *Josiah* is an Instance that must be remembered here, and the rather because the present Subject of our Discourse, our Deceased friend, did so resemble him in the Things *Josiah* was Excellent for, early Piety, remarkable tenderness of Heart and Zeal in reforming: This *Josiah all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for* and so did *Jeremiah*; nay, they made it an Ordinance in *Israel* their Lamentation was not a Land-flood, upon a particular

tical occasion, but soon gone and heard of no more, but they frequently repeated their Lamentations for him, 2 Chron. 35. 24, 25. Yea we find those of the weaker Sex, yet where eminent, have been generally lamented by good People, thus we find the Disciples concerned for *Dorcas's* Death, and the Widows Weeping about her, as they had good Reason, seeing she was so full of good Works, so abounding in the Fruit of faith and Holiness. *Acts* 9. 36.—39. But

2. To particularize some of the Reasons why it is the Practice of God's People, and the Duty of all, to be greatly affected with the Death of good, but especially of eminently good Men. And it is thus.

1. *R.* Because of the honour we owe to the Spirit and Image of God in the Saints, the Work of Grace in them, the interest God hath in them, and the Relation they stand in to God. If some Prince, or some great Man, send us his Picture lively and curiously drawn, should it not grieve us, when we have this removed from our view, and taken from us. Out of Love to the Persons we should Love the Picture, and Love to look upon it, and be grieved when we cannot do it. Now, (though the blessed Jesus, the only begotten and eternal Son of God, who must have the preheminance in all Things, have this as his peculiar Prerogative, that he is the brightness of his Father's Glory, the *express Image of his Person*, Heb. 1. 3. yet) lively Saints are lively Pictures of the holy God; they bear his Image, and much resemble him, and it should be very grievous to us to lose such as did represent God so takingly to us. Again, they are God's Children, which he lends us the Company of, nay,

may, if we are Believers, they are our Brethren, Children of the same Father with us, and we shall express little Love to God, and little natural Affections, if such be taken from us, and we not be exceedingly affected with it.

2. R. God's People do, and all should, greatly lament the Death of eminently good Men, especially when taken away in the midst of their peculiar usefulness, because it is an Argument of God's Displeasure. God Honours the World so far as to Board out his Children in it. Now as when a Noble-man takes ~~away~~ away his Children from the Persons he Boarded them with, on a sudden, and surprizingly, it intimates some disgust he hath taken; so it is for God to strip the World of his Dear Children, especially when in the prime of their Time and serviceableness when engaged in great Work, and might in a course of Nature, been able long vigorously to have attended it; it gives just ground of Apprehension that God is displeased, and we should be grieved at any the least, but especially at plain and great Intimations of God's Displeasure. When God shews himself any thing angry, and his Anger doth but begin to breath out, but especially when it plainly flames out, and he manifest himself to be not a little, but greatly Angry we should in Ingenuity be not a little, but exceedingly grieved at it.

3 R. God's People do, and all should make great Lamentation upon such sad Occasions as these before us, as they open a Door to sore Judgements and are Presages and Forerunners of such. As we have Reason to be grieved, so likewise to be greatly Afraid at these Tokens of God's Anger. God's faithful Servants are the
Pillars

Pillars of the Earth; they help to hold it up by prevailing for the Countinuanee of Mercy's, and averting of Judgments. *Phinehas* turned away God's Wrath, he stood in the gap that Sin had made, and so kept Ruine from coming in as a Flood, *Num.* 25. 11. so God had destroyed *Israel* for their great Provocations, *had not Moses his chosen, stood before him in the breach; to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them,* *Psal.* 106. 23. and you know where to find his Pleading at large for them *viz.* *Exod.* 32. God is not willing to deny his People in their Requests, and therefore when he has, for Holy and Wise Purposes, no Inclination to hear, he many Times lays the Key of Prayer out of the Way, and removes his praying Servants; And when he doth so in any frequency or with any peculiar aggravating Circumstances, as when he removes them Early, or in the midst of eminent usefulness, it looks frightfully upon the People and Place he removes them from: Thus he sent *Lot* out of *Sodom* to make way for his destroying, with that dreadful Overthrow; thus he housed *Noah* in the Ark, and *Methuselah* in Heaven; and then comes the Deluge. I told you under the last Head, that God's People in the World are like Noblemens Children Boarded out, now these are gainful Guests, the Place they are in, get well by them, they are well paid for their Table, and have many Tokens sent them for their Guest's-sake. So that when these are taken away, there is eminently *Lucrum cessans*; and thus it is when the Children of God are removed out of the World; it loses many Mercies and Acts of Kindnesses from God, that it had while his Children were with it; but that is not the worst of it, there is

Damnum

Damnum emergens too, when God removes his People from a Place in displeasure it is like a Princes recalling his Subjects out of a Forreign Countrey, it looks as if he intended to make War upon it, and send his Armies against it. And when God's removing his Servants carrys such a threatening Intimation in it, well may we be much affected with it.

4. R. God's People do, and all should, greatly Lament at the Death of eminently good Men, because of the great loss they hereby sustain as to Spiritualls. Good Men, especially where more than ordinarily eminent, are greatly advantageous in Soul-concerns; their exemplary Holiness, and solidness in Christianity, their eminency in the Power of Godliness, and in holding forth the Vertues of Christ, have a great tendency, and God oft makes much use of them, to convince and persuade some, to Direct, Quicken and Strengthen others: Now, is it not a sore Loss, and much to be Lamented when dull Souls miss of those, that used kindly to spur them on in the good Ways of God? when Dark and Bewildred Christians lose their Guides in this Wilderness-state, where there are so many By-Paths? and faint-hearted, low-spirited, inconstant Christians lose their steady, skilful and bold-spirited Leaders? when a Church loses its praying Members that were *Israels* Princes with God? When a Vessel at Sea springs a Leak, and takes in a great deal of water, and it must keep pumping hard, or else its in danger of sinking downright; in such Circumstances, is it not lamentable to lose those that wrought hard at the Pump themselves, and set many others on to do so and greatly encouraged them in it?

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5. R. God's People do, and all should, greatly Lament the Death of eminently good Men, as there may be reason to fear they have had an hand in it and been the procuring, provoking causes of it; especially when it is plain, and Conscience doth, or however may and should, Charge them with it, as by some Carriage or other of theirs unquestionable pulling upon themselves such a fore Stroke. *David* had cause to lament the slaughter of the Priests, when he could say to *Abiathar* *I have occasioned the Death of all the Persons of thy Fathers House.* So when eminent, useful, young Christians are taken from their several Great Stations of Service, there is ground to reflect upon our selves, and suspect whether we be not Accessary to this Judgment, and have not provoked God so forely to dispende himself in his wrath by our not prizing not improving, not being thankful for, not complying with, but grieving such eminent active Servants of God, hanging back from their good Motions, not willing to go their pace, not being influenced by their Zeal and exemplariness, not forwarding their zealous Designs for God, though they were willing to accompany us, yea to go foremost and first meet with the Reproach, loss of Worldly Friends, prejudice of outward State, or any other difficulties, we might be apt to affright our selves with the supposal of. And if we find we have any of these ways been guilty of Omissions towards them, and so have provoked God to remove them, we have great Cause to be deeply affected, and sorely afflicted upon their Removal: But especially if any have more plainly and grossly pulled down this Judgment upon them, and been the provoking

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ing Occasion of the Death of such, by their actual discouraging and opposing them in their Motions and Projects for God. But I here close the Doctrinal part because I would not be inconveniently long, and yet would have some room to turn me in the Application.

APPLICATION.

I. By Way of Instruction in a few Words.

1. Here see the true honourableness of being really and eminently Religious, what an Incouragement we have to be so, and how inexcusable we must needs be, if notwithstanding such an Incouragement from God, we refuse so to be. God hath affixed this great Honour to serious Godliness, that it, the most of all things, makes Men Live desired, and Die lamented. Wicked Men keep up their Esteem by their Grandure, they force a Reputation, and when that force is off, all the Respect that was shewn them Vanishes: Men dare not but express outward Respect to them, because they are afraid of them, but when they need not fear them, they despise them when they are Dead, their Memory rots and stinks. But Godliness and serious Religion hath this to commend it to us, that it makes Men precious both while Living, and when Dead too, to sober and reputable Persons, to all whose good Opinion is of any Reputation, and worth the having, the Memory of true, and especially of eminent Saints is embalmed, and remains very fragrant, when their Bodies are Dead, and lie rotting in the Grave: Putrefaction and Stench seizes their Bodies, but it reaches not their good Name; they
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are honoured at their Death, they Die lamented, and their Remembrance is very grateful and pleasing. *They Buried good Hezekiah in the chiefest of the Sepulchres of the Sons of David, and all Judah did him Honour at his Death,* 2 Chron. 32. 33. *The Name of the Wicked shall rot, but the Memory of the Just is blessed,* Prov. 10. 7. *The Righteous shall be in Everlasting Remembrance,* Psalm 112. 6. And what an Invitation is this to hearty vigorous ingaging in Gods Service, that he hath secured such Honour to it? How shall we answer it, if notwithstanding, we continue afraid or ashamed of true sound Religion, and the Power of Godliness! How sadly, and inexcusably will they prove mistaken, who seek for Honour in other ways, slighting and neglecting this, which is the only Way to the truest most valuable Honour?

2. Here see, In the Glass of this Truth, see the odiousness and wretched Wickedness of rejoicing at the Death of good Men. If any be found, openly triumphing, or secretly glad, and Blessing themselves at such sad Providences, as hereby rid of those that disturbed and shamed them in their Sins, made their Consciences uneasy by their convincing Lives, or made their sinful Courses shameful to them, and to cost them something, by their Zeal to Punish, and so restrain and reform their Sins, which are so provoking to God, threatening to the Publick, and dangerous to the Sinners themselves, both Soul and Body, for Time and Eternity: If any such be found, how much Pitty do they need? They shew themselves most prophane and stupid Sinners: What got the Men of *Sodom*, suppose they did, as possibly they might, rejoice, when eased

eased of *Lot*? They had but a little Time to injoy their Ease and fancied Happiness in. But I hope there are none such as these within hearing.

3. Here see also the great Sin and Stupidity of such as are unconcerned, at unaffected with the Death of good Men; such as do not rise to such an height of wickedness as the forementioned black sort of Sinners do, do not fix upon themselves that plain brand of Hell, rejoycing at the Death of eminently good Men; do not with those two and forty profane Children, of probably more profane Parents, mock at ascended *Elijah's*, and wish that remaining *Elisha's* would soon follow, and go up after them: Yet they fix upon themselves the brand of unconcernedness at such Providences, and that brand is black enough; they can weep plentifully, grieve at the very Heart for some particular private Loss but such publick Losses little move them, they are *Gallio's* here; they care for none of these things; Let but their Estates increase, their Corn and Wine flow in, their Family's Prosper as to outwards, they are not concerned, nor can find in their Heart to put up a Prayer, shed a Tear, or be at the pains of one sensible Soul-afflicting Thought, though good Men Die apace, and publick Blessings drop away fast one after another. This is far from God's express Commands, and our plain Duty; this private, selfish, hoggish Spirit is quite contrary to these. But,

II. For Exhortation.

1. Let us make great Lamentation at, be very deeply affected with the Death of God's
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faithful Servants and especially this fresh and great Stroke, this present peculiarly sad Occasion for such Lamentation. And here as a Ground-work to this Exhortation, and to make way for its piercing deeper, let me give you a few touches of this late eminent, now glorified *Saints Character*. You know it is not my practice ordinarily to take up any thing of *Funeral Sermons* in the Encomiums of the Dead: But this before me I take to be an extraordinary Case, and so may warrantably step out of my usual Road. Where God has been very eminently at work, polished and furnished at a more than ordinary Rate, and there are several things peculiarly quickning in the Lives of Christians, one may, yea should bring such Persons and the Graces of God's Spirit in them into the Light to the Glory of their Owner and Former; therefore I hope I may without Offence, and without making a President of it, draw some of the Features of this late lovely Saint. Indeed, as I wish we may have no more occasions for this Work by the Death of such eminent Christians; so I doubt there will not be many to be found who by such burning and shining Lives will give such occasion for holding forth their Vertues and Graces to the Praise of their blessed Master at their Death. Well! come see a Man heartily bound for Heaven, and that is got thither early; soon ripe, and soon gathered.

He was a true *Hananiab* (Neh. 7. 2.) *A faithful man, and one that feared God above many*; truly Conscientious, a close Walker with God; the deepest Streams run most silently, and the fullest Vessels sound least, so he made no Noise, but had a great deal in him: With the Violet

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he indeavoured to hide himself, but his fragraney discovered him. He was not a talking, and noisy, but an inward, yea an active and buisie Christian; he relied wholly upon the Righteousness of the dear Lord Jesus, the one Mediator between God and Man, for Justification he looked thither, and only thither for that (as his Papers he hath left behind him abundantly Testify) yet had a great value for Holiness, as God's Image, Christ's Practise, and great Design, and the badge of our Allegiance, the necessary Specimen of our Gratitude to him, and Evidence of our Interest in him; he took special Care that his Master when ever he came should not find him Idle, off of his Work, or Loitering in it, as his Conversation undeniably demonstrated.

He was one of a very solid Judgment and savoury Spirit, yea of a rich Spiritual Fancy; as his Occasional Meditations, of which there were several, do sufficiently speak. In Imitation of his Blessed Master whom he had a peculiar Love to, and much Communion with) he indeavoured to spiritualize every Thing he met with, the seasons of the Year, the several Occurrences in his Family, nay many things that not only by the Men of the World, but even by too many Christians, are suffered to go by without any Improvement; Particularly he much imployed, and gave vent unto, a gracious and full Heart about that which lately was so much the Subject of Discourse, and took up Mens time and Thoughts, though in another Way; viz. the Coin. When others were busy and mightily concern'd to get clear of their old diminished Money, that they might not be outwardly Losers by it; he was most concerned to put it to

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Use in the best Sense, and get spiritual Advantage by it; there is scarce a Circumstance about the Coin, but he some way or other notably improved it in his Meditations, and brought Honey out of it.

Not very long since, he had a considerable Loss at Sea, but this did not at all either soure or deject him; nothing was there to be discerned of any such Loss in his Carriage afterward, no Discontent, or Melancholy, no drawing in of his open charitable Hand upon this Occasion; but this Providence sends him to his Closet, and there he spiritualizes it in a notable Meditation, comparing this Loss to a cutting of his Nails, and running the Parallel, in sundry Particulars, with a great deal of Judgment, and spiritual Skill and Savouriness.

These his Meditations, and his Experiences, and Evidences, and the like; I doubt not but are worthy to see the Light, and would be of Publick Use, and it is Pitty he should not thus continue to be useful, when God has by an awful and to the Church a very afflictive Providence (though to him a very gracious one) taken him from those many Instances of Service, he was with his whole Heart ingaged in.

He had a considerable Collection of good Books, and got more Time to spend with them, and made better use of them than one could have Thought, a Person that made such Conscience of a Religious Care of and Walk with his Family, and Diligence in his Particular Calling, and minding the Publick Interest of Christ, could do. One would wonder, that a Person of so much Business, could find so much Time for Reading, Collecting, and Composing, as he did;

did; no Question he redeemed a good deal of this Time from his Sleep. He was a *Nathanael, an Israelite indeed, without guile*, a Man of Designs, but no private, selfish Ones, they were all for God and his Interest; these he was full of, and drove them on heartily, he devised liberal Things, for the Honour and House of God, and the good, especially the Spiritual and Eternal good of others. He was ready to every good Work, ready to Distribute; not only to stir up, and bespeak others Charity for distressed Saints, but was very liberal himself on all such Occasions.

He hath been for several Years a Monthly Contributor to a Family of Distressed *French* Protestants amongst us (a Sacrifice with which I doubt not God is well pleased, and doth the more require of us at this Time, so to express our Sympathy with those of these his Servants that are now Suffering:) And he never complained of the Burden, nor made the Continuance of the Charge, the increase of his Family, occasional Losses, nor the numerousness of Objects, an Argument for with-drawing his charitable Hand.

He was very forward and large hearted in Contributing to the Education of hopeful Young Men for the Ministry; and very eminent for his setting up, and getting a Maintenance for the Gospel, and not only improved his Interest with others, but by his own Purse encouraged and settled the Preaching of the Gospel among Poor People that could not maintain it, and ignorant, careless People, that were unacquainted with the Gospel, and had no desire after it; Two Congregations especially, one in this

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County, and the other in the next have Cause to Bless God for him, and I hope will still have much more Cause. How industrious was he in fixing, and prudently managing and providing for them a Gospel Ministry, and how transported with any hopes and prospect of Success! A true *Timothy* he was, few like-minded that so naturally Care for the Things of God, (*Phil. 2. 20, 21.*) *Naturally* (as Mr. *Flavel* well glosses) in Opposition not to *Spiritually*, but *Artificially*. Many can artificially Act the Part of a Zealot, when their own Temporal Interest lies in it; but he naturally and therefore freely, chearfully and constantly Cared for the concerns of Christ. A true *Paul* he was in this, the Care of the Churches came upon him: A true *Simeon*, could even depart with Joy, when he could see Christ's Glory in the Success of the Gospel and Salvation of poor Souls in an hopeful Way to go on and Prosper.

He was a mighty Lover of Prayer, very enlarged and lively in it himself: How sweet and savoury, when we could get him upon this Duty at our Private-days, though his Humility and mean Thoughts of himself much hindered us of this Priviledge. And how earnest a spokesman was he for Prayer: More than once hath he been very instrumental to set up that Weekly Hour of Closet-Prayer, more especially for the Church: Which the Famous Mr. *Richard Allein* did so incourage in his Time, and which was so successful when first set up (*viz.* after the breaking out of the *Popish Plot*, in 1678) How many Ministers in all the Counties about us, have serious, argumentative Letters of his by them, wherein he intreats them to imploy their

their Interest for setting up this Exercise.

Once more: What a peculiar part did he bear in setting up and managing the Work of Reformation among us, that good Work which I hope God will eminently Bless, and make a means of Blessing to us. What share he had in breaking the Ice, forming the Society, providing you with necessary materials for the Work; how uneasie till Things were so ripened as to get to Action, and how pleased, where there was any Success against Sin and Irreligion! And how many Letters he wrote upon this Business also to several Places to incourage them to set it on Foot, promising them his utmost Assistance in it; some of you know better than I can tell you. In short, he was of a *Nebemiah's* Spirit, grieved for *Jerusalem's* Walls lying waste, and very intent upon, very industrious in, repairing them. A true *Josiah* for those Eminencies of his I have had occasion to mention before, his Zeal for Reformation, and his Early Piety: As good *Josiah*, so this our *Joseph* was good betimes: He was like his Scripture Name-sake, the Patriarch *Joseph*, he feared God Young, and was an active Instrument in God's Hand to provide for many, and keep many Souls alive, through the Care he took about getting spiritual Food for them. He much resembled his English Name-sake Mr. *Joseph Allein*, in Zeal for God, and Love to Souls as far as he could go in his Capacity of a Private Christian. He plied his Time, he run fast, and got to the Goal, soon. At the end of the Three and Thirty Years he had done more for, and got more Communion with, God and Christ, than many do in double that Time.

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Now it is such an one as this, that I call you to lament for the loss of, and sure you will all own, I have a great deal of Reason to do so; To resume therefore, and a little particularly Press the Exhortation. And

1. I would call upon my Self, and crave leave humbly to do the like to my Fathers and Brethren in the Ministry: Be we deeply affected with the Death of this eminently good Man. We have lost an *Hur*, that used to help us in the Mount by *holding up our Hands*, *Exod. 17. 12*. We have lost a Praying Friend, that was much and mighty upon his Knees, and helped us much in the Lord. For my Part, I must say of him, as *David* of his Dear *Jonathan*, *2 Sam. 1. 26*. *I am distressed for Thee my Brother, not for any loss of thine, but for my loss of Thee*. What *David* said, when *Abner* was Dead, we may say upon this sad Occasion, (for a greater, that is a better than *Abner* is here) *a great Man is fallen in our Israel*, and we are Weak this Day by the fall of such a Tall Cedar as this, *2 Sam. 3. 38, 39*. The House of the Ministry is shaken sorely by this its next Neighbours, that was so strengthening to it, being pulled down; We had need therefore to lament greatly.

2. Do you do so too, that are Members of this Congregation, which this now glorious Member of the Assembly and Mother-Church above, was once a shining Star in. He is now removed, that lately directed and quickned you in your Publick Worship by his awful, serious, reverent Carriage in Prayer: He looked not out for Matter for Distractions as too many do, but closed his Bodily Eye generally in that Duty,
that

that so his Soul-eye might be freer to look upward and inward, and be in a better Capacity to attend the great Work before him with an united Heart. You have lost one that was a great Ornament and Defence to your Christian Society, a faithful Keeper of both his own, and his Brother's Vineyard; a Guide and Monitor by his Holy, Humble Walk; Eyes to the Blind, Feet to the Weak, an Establisher to the Wavering, a Spur to the Dull; you have sustained all these great Losses in this one, in the Loss of this Dear Servant of God.

3. Let me call on the Members of other Churches to Lament with us, out of a brotherly Compassion to us, and a Fellow-feeling of our Loss; nay, for their own Sakes: I hope they have many Ways fared better for him, and therefore are Partners in this our Loss, and should bear a Part in the Sorrow for him; and I doubt not, you of the other Congregation in this Place, do thus, and many other Congregations, when they hear of his Death, will do so. Therefore to proceed.

4. You that are Members of the Society for Reformation amongst us, be you deeply affected with the Loss of this good Man, Your Particular, Peculiar Concern in this Publick Loss, I need not to tell you; be you very sensible of it. It is a very great breach upon you; his fervent Prayers for you, his Prudence, Faithfulness, Indefatigableness, in the good Work he and you were engaged in, you will find a great want of; be affected with it.

5. All of you, that are Inhabitants of this Place, do you Lament greatly for this great Loss the Church and Nation in general, but this
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Town more particularly, hath sustained. We have been wonderfully preserved from Fires and sad Accidents, from contagious Distempers and other Judgments more than most Places of this bigness have been; we have been rendred somewhat peculiarly remarkable for the peculiarly gracious Fence of Providence about us: But truly, if we should have many such losing Years as this hath been, if we should have many more such strokes as these; nay, if but a few more such Stakes should be pulled up amongst us, as have of late been, eminent Ministers, and eminent Christians of both Sexes, and some of them in their Prime, if God should continue such Providences, it would look out darkly upon us, as if God was about to pull down his Fence, and lay us open, and make a way for his Anger: Which the infinitely gracious God prevent. O Pitty the Place of your Nativity or Abode, and be sensible of any thing that looks in the least like God's coming near to it in Judgment! Do not by your Senselessness under such strokes as these, provoke God to repeat them, and so greatly indanger your Selves, this Place, yea the whole Land; And this brings me to the next Advice.

II. Lament greatly in this Case; but be sure you do it to Purpose, see that your Lamentation be so Circumstanced as to be Effectual, and Answer its End; see that it be after the right Order, according to the Rules God gives us in his Word, and so as to please him, or else our greatest Lamentations will signifie nothing: I must but just Name Things.

1. So Lament the Loss of this Holy Man, as
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narrowly to search for, and when found, to bewail and heartily to turn from, all the Sins that were the Causes of such a stroke upon us. Is there not a Cause? To be sure there is, be not easie till you have found it out; and resolve by Strength fetched in from Christ, to be the Death of those Sins, that have procured, as a Punishment upon us, such a Death as this, that we are now Lamenting. Bewail our not prizing, not improving such peculiar helps, our not helping with such, our refusing to be helped and influenced by them, and the like: I must leave you in your Self-Reflection to particularize and enlarge here.

2. So Lament the Loss of this Good Man, as to imitate him. We say we Honour his Memory, I am sure we should, let us see that we do, by Writing after the fair Copy he hath left us. Endeavour we what we can to make him alive still in his Exemplariness and Usefulness, by our treading in his Steps, that in a Sense, he may not be Dead while we are alive; let us Copy out his Holiness, Zeal, Humility, Circumspection, Self-Acquaintance, and all other his shining Graces; let his Death quicken us: Imitate we him now he is Dead, more than we did (Alas!) while he was Alive with us; now follow we him close, that so we may not be Eternally separated from his choice Company, and the better Company he is now with, but have grounded Hopes, that when our turn to Die comes, we shall go to him, yea to his God and Saviour, and never Part.

3. Be so sensible of your Loss, as now to fall more heartily to your Soul-work: You have lost a great Help in it, you had need mind it
more

more your selves, and look better to your own Hearts and Steps, when you are deprived of such a Faithful, Prudent Watchman, Monitor, and Leader, that went before you in the ways of God, avoided and warned you of By-ways, and directed and encouraged you to Duty by his Holy, Lively, and winning Conversation.

4. So Judiciously, Sincerely and Christianly Lament for the Loss of him, as more vigorously to set to the Work, his Head and Heart and every Thing was engaged in, but his wise and gracious Master hath now called him off from. Let not this great Work of God fall, or so much as flag with him. You of that Society, strengthen one another's Hands more now, carry on the Work; it was an indelible Honour to him, that he Died in the midst of a Work, God's Glory and Christs Kingdom is so much concerned in. You have lost the manifold and very considerable Assistance of a zealous active Member, and this should put you upon more vigorous Endeavours, to supply his lack of Service, and upon taking more Pains with your selves, and strengthening one another, and more closely following your Work, so to do somewhat towards repairing your Loss in the removal of such an Helper: And let this animate you too, to stick to, and carry on the Cause of God in your Hands, to think that you have a Member of your Society in Heaven. And others not actually of this Society, should be prevailed with by this speaking Providence to be heartily Assistant to them that are of it. Death has taken off a very industrious Work-Man, a Master-Builder; do you endeavour to make it up by putting your Hand and Shoulder to the Work of the Lord.

5. So

5. So Lament this great Loss, as to be more at the Throne of Grace, more upon your Knees, and besieging Heaven more, for stopping and sanctifying this sore Hand of God, for helping you and all others in their Christian Calling, and giving out larger Supplies of his Spirit. Ministers should be more prayerful, now their help in lively, Gospel-Crediting, Ministry-incouraging Christians is lessened. You that have put your hands to the Plough of *Reformation* should now be more frequent and earnest in your Prayers for God's directing and strengthening you, that now he hath taken from you an eminently helpful Instrument, he would graciously be pleased the more to help you by himself who fills all Instruments who is *all in all*, and hath the residue of the Spirit with him. But these things I must leave you to enlarge upon. I close with one Word.

III. To the much honoured in the Lord, and now sorely afflicted, Relations of this precious Servant of God. Lament you may, none can blame you, and we would heartily Pitty you, that the Hand of the Lord hath so sorely touched you; we would Lament with you, and for you, as well as for our selves. But Blessed be God, though the dark side of this Providence be very dark, yet there is a light side of it too, look upon that: The Wound is deep, and Bleeds much, but there are things God hath provided to stanch its Bleeding, and bind up the Wound, make use of them. I may not pretend to inform you of them, only in your Sorrow to inmind you.

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1. You the honoured Parents, thankfully and admiringly remember what Cause you have to Bless God (even notwithstanding this cutting stroke) that God honoured you with such a Son, lent him to you so long, and made use of him so much. You have lost a Son, but not in a Course of Sin, not Cut off in, and by Iniquity (as is the Heart-cutting Case of many Parents, and of more than ordinary, in this loose, degenerate Age.) You have lost a Son, but not in a State of Uselessness, no nor in a way of mean, and but ordinary Usefulness, but one eminently serving God, and the Interest of Christ, which makes our Loss, and yet your Comfort the greater. You have lost a dear Son, and that early Comparatively, early with respect to his Years, but not to his Activity: Through Grace he wrought hard, and finished the Work of an ordinary Life, in half the Time; that which many Christians scarce do at above Sixty, he did in a little more than Thirty Years. O Bless God, admire his free and powerful Grace! Your Dear Son, hath got the start of you, and you are following after; but be Content to stay a while to carry on the Work of God, here; which your Son is called from, to follow that which is higher. In a Word, pore not sinkingly upon this stroke, but be prevailed with to join with us in Prayer, that the Wound may not bleed inwardly so as to sink your Spirits: Why should the Church of Christ be bereaved of you both in one Day. God hath supported you wonderfully under very sharp Trials, and I trust he will under this.

2. You the disconsolate Widow of this departed Servant of Christ, yet encourage your Self in the
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the Lord, your Husband's God, your Ancestor's God, your own God. A tender choice Husband hath left you, but he hath left a Rich Covenant behind him, for you to lodge your Self, your Children, and all your Concerns in; plead it humbly and believingly with God. Whatever the Sense of the Words may be, *Jer. 49. 11.* As respecting the *Edomites*, God says it with a great deal of heartiness to his faithful Servants, *Leave thy Fatherless Children with me, I will preserve them alive, and let thy Widows trust in me.* Bless God that ever gave you such an Head, such an Helper; follow his Faith; cleave to his God, and his God will stick by you, you need not fear it. Your Husband though Dead to you, yet is Alive; he Lives to God, and with God, let that satisfy you; yea, let that exceedingly quicken you. It is your great Grief, that you are separated; but do but tread in his steps, and in due Time you shall reach his Crown, you shall go to him and see him; yea, sit down with him in Glory to all Eternity. In short, Our Loss is great, but we must own, yours is the greatest of all, I would with the heartiest Sympathy acknowledge it: You have lost by this Providence almost as much as could be lost in a Creature; but still, Blessed be God, you have a Christ to go to, and he is better than Ten; nay, than Ten Thousand of the usefulest, dearest, choicest Creature-Comforts; there cannot be such a Creature-loss, but he can abundantly recompense it; go therefore and make up all in him. May he, the best of Husbands, be yours! Him I recommend to you; to him I recommend you; with him I leave you.

THE INTRODUCTION.

‘**G**OD is various in his Working as to
 ‘ Time, Some who lived in a Course of
 ‘ Sin, *Who walked in the Ways of their Hearts, &c.*
 ‘ *Eccl. 11. 9.* Can tell the Time, the Day, the
 ‘ Text, the Sermon, the Minister, when God
 ‘ put a stop to their Course——Others can tell
 ‘ the signal Providence of God with which he
 ‘ pleased to Work——But others cannot tell the
 ‘ Time, and this hath been to some a long Time,
 ‘ an Objection against the Truth of their Regene-
 ‘ ration. As if all the Regenerated Persons in
 ‘ Scripture knew the Time——As if there were
 ‘ any ground in Scripture for such a Position, *All*
 ‘ *that are new Born, know the Time of their new*
 ‘ *Birth.* Doth not God many Times in Infancy,
 ‘ in Childhood, cast in the immortal Seed, which
 ‘ being watered by the Care of Godly Parents at
 ‘ home, and by the lively Word Preached, spring-
 ‘ eth and groweth up, the Poor Christian *knows*
 ‘ *not how?* This is a meer Vanity and Devils De-
 ‘ lusion to trouble thy Soul about the Time, look
 ‘ to the Work that it be soundly wrought; *Mr.*
Firmin Real Christian, Page 13.

‘ God’s Work is various in the Method——
 ‘ those who have been bred up under clear Gospel
 ‘ Preaching, and the Lord begins his Work, be-
 ‘ fore they have abused it in that Manner as others
 ‘ have done, those commonly have a greater mix-
 ‘ ture

'ture of the Gospel in the Work; but others
'who either live in dark Corners — or have
'played the Wantons, abused the Grace of God,
'those when God Works, shall know little
'enough of the abused Gospel at first; *Ibid.*
page 15.

'I am so far from judging it to be necessary
'to all Christians, to know the Time of their
'Conversion, that I think it is in an Ordina-
'ry way impossible to any Christian; these in-
'deed, whose Lives have been stained with
'enormous Crimes, do usually know when at
'first they began to be reclaim'd, and what
'were the Thorns with which their Way was first
'hedged up; but how they should know what was
'the *Ultimum non esse* of the Old Man, and the
'*Primum esse* of the New Man; how they
'should know the Nick of Time in which they
'ceased to be Natural, and began to be Spiritu-
'al, without some such Assistance as is not usu-
'al, I conceive not. *Mr. Hickman, The Be-
lievers Duty towards the Spirit, page 121.*

CHAP. I.

*Containing an Account of Himself, and of
God's gracious dealing with his Soul, in
his Childhood, and Younger Years.*

[Nottingham, May, &c. 1684.]

I Cannot but take Notice of, and really think
I have as great Cause to bewail the early
and lamentable Discovery of the Corruption of
D . . . my

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my Nature, as ever poor Creature in the World had; and yet withal am in Hopes, that the Lord was graciously pleased to begin with me by his Spirit pretty betimes also; the first Time observeable to me, was when I was Learning my *Primmer*: Once as I was in my Chamber, my Heart was on a sudden so powerfully wrought upon, that I could not contain my self, but ran to my Mother who was in the next Room, (my Heart being so full, that I could not of a pretty while declare my Mind) and begged of Her to teach me to Pray and sing Psalms; She seemed pleased with me, and presently turned me to a Prayer in my Book, and bid me Learn that, which I did; and she bid me observe them how they sang Psalms, and so I might Learn; my Father a while after desired to hear the Prayer I had learnt; I was averse to it at first, the Family being by, but upon his renewed Desires I kneeled down to my Work, and found those stirrings within me which I scarce knew what to make of then; but Alas! these good Affections were not constant, but met with sad Interruptions afterwards.

After I had learnt to read *English*, my Father sent me to School in this Town (where I was as I remember, about half a Year) which I have many Times thought was no small hindrance to my Learning Christ betimes; For tho' the Care of my Parents was evident, in their placing of me in an honest, religious Family, yet I had more Liberty then before, and was daily among a Company of lewd prophane Boys, which proved a great Temptation to me; I have Cause to be humbled, when I think of the Childish Folly and Vanity I have here been guilty of, especi-

especially the mispense of a great deal of precious Time; but I do not remember that I was (however very seldom) a Ring-leader among them; nay, indeed it was not their ordinary use to trust me; and when I have been intangled with them, methought I was uneasie in my Mind, having those inward Checks which many times have spoiled my Sport: But my Frame and Carriage before and after compared together, so far as I can observe, this was a real backning to me; I remember it was their Use to give every Boy a particular Name, and that which they gave me was [*Good Man.*] I suppose it might be in Reproach, because of my Father, but I was very well pleased with it, too Proud of the Name, while I too too little regarded the Thing; several Things occurred to me here, which this short hint may bring to my Thoughts.

By the Instructions of my Parents, and secret impulses upon my own Spirit, I was pretty early put upon the Performance of Secret Prayer, though my Childish Fancies, and frightful Conceits did sometimes interrupt my Practice here-in at the first; I was very fearful of being discovered, which made me make choice of the most Private Places I could think of, sometimes in the Stable and Out-houses, and sometimes in the open Air, when through my Childish Conceits I durst not have gone into such Places: But after a while I begun to be more bold, usually doing it in my Lodging-Room, but was very fearful of being over-heard, for I loved always to use my Voice; one Time above the rest, I remember, when I had met with more than ordinary Enlargement in the Duty, and so had a

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little exceeded my Time, my Sister and the Maid came up, who lay in the Room by me, at which I was surprized, thinking they would wonder what I did up so long; so to put it off the better, I made as though I would have frightened them: And I heard my Mother tell my Father in the next Room, the Lad hath sitten up all this while to fright them; though I knew otherwise, yet I was well Content to let it go so; as though I was ashamed of my Practice, or had been singular therein; I am ready to think the Hand of my great Enemy was in this Matter: For when I could have been pretty free at other Times, yet to be sure, if I was about to apply my self to this Duty, especially in the Night, my Mind should have been filled with such Thoughts, and my Fancy so strangely wrought upon sometimes, that I durst not for my Life have gone alone.

After a while I begun to discern more clearly, that I had a love to, and delight in Holy Duties: Especially Secret Prayer, and Singing of Psalms, in which above others I found my Heart most sweetly wrought upon; Many a Time when I have been with my God in a Corner, and could have heard my Companions at Play, my Heart hath been ready to say [*It's good for me to be here.*] Once I remember, the Night before the Day called *Valentine-day*, when I heard others busie talking, who they would have to their *Valentines*, I thought within my Self, could I but get into some Corner, and there get a sight of my Heavenly Father, he would be the best *Valentine* for me; which accordingly in the Morning I did, and indeed I was not mistaken in him: For afterwards when

I heard them very busie in such Talk the Day after, I had many sweet Thoughts upon this Account, which I attempted several Times to speak of to some of my Relations, but always when it came to it, I could not prevail with my self to do so: And for singing of *Psalms*, it did me good at Heart to hear a good lusty Company at that sweet Imployment, and I would cast in my Mite as well as I could; my Father ordinarily used to sing after Evening Sermon; O! I well remember, how it revived my Heart to hear him begin.

It was the great Care of my Dear Parents to keep me from Sabbath-Prophanation, a serious strictness herein I found some Secret averiseness to, though I was ashamed when at any Time it was discovered; and one Part of the Day, upon the Account of a Duty wherein I was very deficient, I could many Times have heartily wished over; yet I hope I was getting Ground of this Distemper, and could after a while truly call the Sabbath my Delight, looking upon these as the best and happiest Days of my Life, the approach of which I have many Times longed for and rejoiced in, especially those Days wherein I had the greatest Advantages for my Soul, my Fathers Days at *Sandivere*; and it hath sadned my Heart to see or hear of others prophaning this Day; as it was ordinary for Boys in the Summer-time to Bath themselves, and to go to get Nuts upon it, and the like: And I have great cause to be thankful unto God, who by his Grace hath kept me back from such sinful extravagant Courses upon His Day, which my Nature as Corrupt, was equally inclined to with the prophaneest of them all.

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It pleased the Lord early to take me under the Discipline of his Rod, though he laid on very lightly, compared with what my Sins deserved; upon the Account of my Original Corruption, yea, and to prevent that dishonour which I have brought to his Name, in my Life past, wherein he hath been heaping his Benefits upon me: ~~Upon this Account he might justly have strangled me in the Birth, or have cut me off as soon as I had come into the World, and sent me down into that Pit of Destruction, from whence there is no more Hope of Redemption:~~ But to the Everlasting Honour of his Patience and Long-suffering, I have hitherto been spared; but while I was Young I had two or three dangerous fits of Sickness, wherein I was given up as dead of those about me; I cannot so well recollect my Frame and Carriage under these afflictive Strokes as I desire, being as I remember seven or eight Years ago: But this I remember, under the first of these Fits being a Fever (which brought me very low, and took away the Use of my Hands and Feet for a Time when it left me, which if it had not done, the Doctor told me it had taken away my Life, under this) my Heart was very dead, dull and unaffected; my Dear Father apprehending my Danger, came to me, and began seriously to Discourse to me about the Misery of Mankind by the Fall, and the way of his Recovery by Jesus Christ, &c. Which Sayings of his I laid up in my Heart, diligently attending to him, but found it very unaffected with them, at which I was much concerned: There was an Expression I had heard some Body make use of in Prayer, run much in my Mind, which was to this Purpose [Lord,

not the least
possible ground
for this thought
see the Notes.

if

if thou hadst taken me away in such or such a fit of Sickness, before my Conversion, how sad had my Case been?] And I begun to fear from my Senselessnes, that I was yet in such a Condition; it is like the Distemper I was then under, might do something at least to encrease the Indisposition which was upon my Soul: But if indeed it was so with me as I feared, I have cause to make mention of Gods great Mercy in sparing me also in every Prayer I make; I endeavoured to be as patient as I could under the Affliction, but whether it was not more to please my Relations and those about me, and to obtain their Commendations, than from a Sence of my Duty I cannot tell, but am sure the former had too great a Hand in it.

Not long after I had a sudden though much shorter Fit, and being laid down upon my Bed exceeding Sick, and no Body near me, my Extremity was so great, that my former Patience was even quite worn out; and had not my gracious God come in some way to my Relief, I had fainted in this Affliction: But that God who doth not use to fail his, in a Time when all other Refuges fails them, was pleased to come in with those gracious Manifestations of his Love to my Soul, which did indeed warm to Purpose that Cloud or something worse within my Breast, at which I was concerned in my former Illness; O how sweet they were to me! I can better Think, than Speak or Write of them. They were such welcome Guests to me, that I, as it were, laid aside the Thoughts of my present Extremity, to entertain them; and methought I could have been Content to have been Sick a great while; might I but have enjoyed the gracious Presence

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of God I then did; my poor Heart got vent to him in some sweet Expressions, which I treasured up in my Mind, and made use of them in Secret, and attempted to have put them into my Constant Form of Prayer before my Relations, but such was my Childish bashfulness that I could not.

While I was yet Young, as soon as I well knew what Cursing and Swearing, and taking Gods Name in Vain was, I found that I had an Abhorrence of, and an Indignation against those Sins; it was enough ordinarily to have put me into a trembling Posture, when I have heard any make use of that Hellish Language, I cannot well tell how it was with me: But after I grew bigger, and began to delight more in Play, and used to go Abroad into the Town to seek for Play-fellows, and so was more frequently in the Company of such Prophane Boys, the Corruption of my Nature soon discovered it self, and I sadly experienced the Evil of such bad Company, for by this means I found my Zeal against these Sins exceedingly to Cool and Languish, so that after a while I could bear with them well enough; nay worse than that, I began to take a secret Delight in them; yea, the Devil followed his blow so smartly with me here, that he would be tempting me to the Commission of them my Self, especially when alone, and once did prevail with me so far, as to commit them in my Thoughts, which I many Times have, and desire I never may think of, but with Shame and Grief; yet I dare not but own and acknowledge the great goodness of God to me, who was pleased to give me a sight of my Sin and Misery while in this decaying Estate; I had

had many a troubled Thought about it, and began to think such Company was to be avoided.

The fore-mentioned Particular hath cost me many a serious and sad thought; it was not long before I began to bethink my self from whence I was fallen, and to repent, and renew my former Zeal; and in the interim, I had many a check from an awakened Conscience, much uneasiness upon my Spirit: But once one Evening, as I was communing with my Heart upon my Bed about this Matter, I drew up this Resolution, that I would both be more careful for the future to avoid such Company, and that when I was cast into it, I would endeavour both to have and shew more dislike of those Sins, and that I would speak of this my Design to one of my Companions who was more sober than the rest, and desire his Assistance in reprovng of them; afterwards being about to compose my self to Sleep, I had many comfortable Thoughts of what I had done, Comfort being in an unusual manner darted into my Mind, which did again a little revive me: Accordingly the next convenient Opportunity I had, walking out with my said Companion into the Field, I began to tell him of the frequent and lamentable Commission of those Sins, and desired him to assist me in reprovng of them when ever he heard them committed, which he readily granted; and though, alas! This Duty was but lamely performed, and with little Success, yet I would bless God for putting such a Thing into my Heart.

I have been guilty of much Folly and Vanity in my Childhood and Youth, the Thoughts whereof is very grievous to me; and wo to me that ever I was born, if these Sins of mine
should

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should lie down with me in the Dust? Oh, how sad it is to think how I have been insnared and drawn into Sin by others! And that which is sader still, how I have been guilty of drawing others to Sin, and hardening them in it by my sad Example! Many have fared the worse, very few I fear that have any way fared the better for me: The Thoughts of these Things have sometimes made me fear, that I was yet unacquainted with a a saving Change, and that notwithstanding all my former Hopes to the contrary, I was yet unsound at bottom, my Heart not thorough for God; and the Devil hath set in with his Temptations here, and would sometimes hurry me on so furiously, as though he would drive me into Despair, tempting me to think my Case desperate, that there was not a Wretch in all the World, all Things considered, so Vile as I: So that sometimes I have been able to entertain none but black Thoughts concerning my self: True, I know more Evil by my Self, then I do by any one in the World besides, and desire to be deeply humbled as I have Cause, if ever poor Creature in this World had; and God forbid I should ever forget so early a discovery of the Pravity of my Nature, while I have a Day to Live: Yet whether my Miscarriages have been so many, and so great as is inconsistent with a State of Grace, I cannot tell, however I am sure I should judge erroneously of them, if I look upon them as unpardonable, and so think it my Duty to strive against such dejecting Thoughts, which would rather keep my Soul from, than drive unto Jesus Christ for Remedy,

Among many other Things, I have been guilty of mispending much precious Time: O, how many golden Hours I have spent in Play, when I should have been remembring my Creator, and minding the Great and Everlasting Concernments of my Soul! How many Holy Duties I have by this means neglected! And what Coldness, Deadness, and Distractions in Duty, that hath by this means been occasioned, whereby God hath been robbed of his Honour, and my poor Soul of the Benefit which otherwise might have been obtained? Like a foolish Child indeed, I have been so intent upon my Play, that I could not mind my Spiritual Meal-times; it is no Comfort to me now to think of that Time which I have spent in needless (and consequently sinful) Recreations, while I might have been recreating my Soul with God, in those heavenly Sports, and sweet Retirements, which sometimes I have enjoyed: What shall I say? Shall I wish I had those Hours now to spend over again? Alas, it is too late! O then what have I done in trifling away, nay, in misemploying that Time, which all the World cannot purchase back a Moment of! Oh that I had herein been wiser for my Soul, that so I might now have had the early redeeming of Time with Comfort to reflect upon! The Lord grant, that a Sense of my Sin and Folly herein may humble me very deeply, and cause me to admire more the Divine Power of his Patience which yet waiteth upon me, and quicken me to greater Diligence in redeeming my Time for the Future: And yet I cannot but take Notice of a kind of uneasiness, which was usually upon my Spirit at such Times; after the fullest Meals of
such

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such Pleasure my Soul hath remained empty, far from true Satisfaction; and at length I begun to employ my Time more in Conversing with God, and reading good Books, and having tasted the sweetness thereof, the former I begun more to Nautiate; I hope, I have cause to Bless God for good Mr. *Baxter's Now or Never* — his Sermon on *Matth. 22. 5.* Mr. *Gouges Young Man's Guide*, and other good Books, which at such Times I have Read.

I have also been guilty of that hainous Sin of Lying: that hainous Sin, I do not call it a trick of Youth, but would rather tremble to think that any should do so; I would be so far from making this an Excuse, my youthful Propensity to it, that I would hereby aggravate it; O what Wickedness and Folly is bound up in this Sin? And what a wicked Heart is this of mine, that is so naturally enclined to it! Sometimes to escape the Rod, or it may be less, I have hazarded the Favour of God, and my precious immortal Soul, of more worth to me than all this World; yet judging impartially, according to the uttermost of my Knowledge and Memory, I have not made this Sin my common Practice; Methinks with a little Pains I could recollect the number of them, for I do not remember that I ever told an Untruth wittingly, but with such an inward Combat as made the Time very remarkable and memorable: Sad Storms that have been raised in my Soul in the Commission of this Sin, and very sad Reflections that have followed afterwards; and sometimes I can remember when I have been conscious of a Fault, and have been strongly tempted and solicited before to contrive a Lie, to excuse

cuse my self, or extenuate the Fault, that I have cast out such Temptations with abhorrence, striving against them with my poor Strength, and have prevailed.

One thing further I remember, and believe I shall do while I Live; one Afternoon as I was walking out, I met with a poor Prophane Boy that was going a Begging from Town to Town; He knowing whose Son I was, presently broke out into very Reviling and Threatning Language; I bore it patiently a while, but was a little fearful lest he should have done me a mischief being alone: But he going on to provoke me, when I was got where I thought I could have run for it if he had fallen upon me, though I durst not Answer him in his own Language, yet being very Angry I begun to Mock him with a stammering he had in his Speech, for which he very nimble took me up, his Words I do not very well remember; but they were to this Purpose, *That Almighty God who had made him so, could presently do the same for me*; which Reproof, though from such a one as he, and seconded (as I remember) with a bloody Oath, yet it pleased the Lord so to set it home upon me, that my Mind was much terrified and perplexed about it a great while after, and I was in continual Expectation when the just Judgment of God he mentioned should fall upon me for my Sin; But it was a warning to me for ever doing the like again, and ever after made me more courteous to, and fearful of offending a poor Body again; I durst never tell my Father or Mother of this, because I had sinned in mocking him.

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There was one thing I hinted at before, which made me greatly to question the Sincerity of my Heart; It was my Fathers Use when at home, every Lords-day in the Afternoon to call us to an Account, what we remembred of the Sermons he had Preached that Day; now I could remember but little, and what I did very confusedly: But my Sister had a good Memory, and could give a very good Account, which made my defectiveness trouble me the more, so that I have many Times secretly wished that Part of the Sabbath over, which occasioned many sad thoughts of Heart in me, because I could not make it out to my self that I counted the Sabbath my Delight; yet I would hope it was not the Day or the Duty that I was a weary of, but my defectiveness in the discharge of it: But thus it continued with me a considerable Time, my Heart being in a very uneasie Case all the while; I then having just learnt to Write, attempted to take something after him, and towards Night would get alone to look over what I had written (which alas, was but little, here and there a bit) hoping that this might be some help to me; but when by those hints I have got something considerable pretty ready in my Thoughts in my Chamber, yet when I have been called down to give an Account to him, my Mind hath been on a sudden so ruffled and disordered that I could scarce say one Word, which troubled me still the more: This my sad Case I laid before the Lord with a heavy Heart, earnestly begging his Assistance, which I did not perceive to come, which heighthened my trouble still; sometimes I would take my Paper a long with me, and holding it out
of

of his sight (for Fear he should have been Angry with me) when I have been at a loss would cast my Eye upon it; this I observed, some took offence at, but once my Father observing me, contrary to my Expectation, with great tenderness bid me if I had writ any Thing to read it, and afterwards directed and much encouraged me in it; But alas! I could write little, which after a while made me very desirous to learn Characters, which after I had resolved upon I soon attained to, and by frequent Practice came to some Perfection in them, which have since been of great use to me, and have sometimes made me capable of being instrumental of the good of others Souls, for which I unfeignedly Bless the Lord; and now my Mind was much satisfied, my former Doubt in a good Measure removed, that I could then wish for a whole Sabbath with all my Heart; but then alas, a new Trouble arose, I was full of fears lest I should hereby take occasion to forget God's Word, and satisfy my self with the bare Reading of it, to which I found my base Heart inclined, against which my good Father gave me a Caution: But I endeavoured almost from my first beginning to Write, that it might be otherwise, which I have many Times since with much Comfort reflected upon, as a greater Sign of the Sincerity of my Heart, than the former was of the contrary.

It pleased the Lord in some Measure to endear his Honour and Interest to me betimes; when I have seen or heard of Transgressors, my Soul hath been grieved; and I begun to be solicitous for *Jerusalem's* welfare, while I had few or no Thoughts how to provide for my own; I would
be

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be enquiring how things went with God's Church, and when I have heard of any Thing that was like to make ill for her, I would be concerned and troubled at it, and could very heartily have joined with the fervent Prayers of others for her Prosperity, while I was able to say but little for her my self; and from the Sufferings of others of God's People, I begun to argue my self into an Expectation of the like Trials; I delighted much in the reading of a Book, Entitled [*The Saints Encouragment in Bad Times*] wherein the Triumphant Deaths of several of the late faithful Witnesses and Martyrs of Jesus Christ is briefly related; my Heart was so affected with those full Streams of Joy and Consolation they met with in the midst of their Sufferings, that I begun passionately to desire the like Sufferings, in hopes of their Comforts, and made it frequently one of my Requests to God in my Secret Addresses to him, that if it was his Will he would Honour me with such a Death. I confess, I know not what to make of this; I would hope there was something that was good in it, some good Affections: Yet I am afraid there was a great deal of that which was bad, which I have Cause to be ashamed of and humbled for, much Pride and Self-conceitedness, as though I was able to Drink of that Cup, too little Regard of and Zeal for God's Honour, which I soon discovered and endeavoured to Correct.

When I was near Fourteen Years of Age my loving and careful Parents began to be thoughtful about disposing of me to some Employment in the World, that I might not be useless and burdensome to my Generation; so enquiry was made

made which way my Inclinations stood; I had some Desires to have been a Minister, but my good Father (no doubt, seeing my great unsuitness) was discouraged from setting me apart to that Sacred Employment, so a Trade was concluded upon. He took me out one Afternoon to walk with him, and asked me, if I was willing to go to *London*, telling me of the great Advances that some have made in their Estates there; but I rather chose to come to this Town, because here I should be nearer my Relations, and have the Opportunity of Seeing and Hearing from them more frequently, and because here I should sit under my Fathers Ministry, which above others the Lord was pleased to Bless to my Soul; in this my Parents freely consented to me, as indeed nothing was done in this Matter contrary to my Mind; and I bless God my choice herein (which I hope was guided by his wise and gracious Providence) I see no Cause as yet to repent, and hope I never shall: But then I begun to think it my Duty to look up to God for his Direction in so considerable a turn of my Life, though alas! I was very defective herein, my Prayers I remember, being very cold and customary; yet I hope, I have fared better for the Prayers of others for me; I have received many choice Favours at the Hands of the Lord since I came to this Place; though I have been removed from the more constant Enjoyment of my dear Relations, yet I have enjoyed more of God than ever; and I have also found more favour in the Eyes of those among whom my Lot is cast, than I could have expected: And though I have met with some malignant Spirits, who have not wanted a Will to prejudice me, yet

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the Lord hath pleased in some Measure so to guide my Ways, that they have not had much Occasion or Advantage to do it, and sometimes the Lord hath pleaded my Cause being Innocent, when I have been either wholly, or in a great measure, silent my self; and in all my Troubles I have had a sweet Liberty to retire into his Presence, and lay open my Grievances before him, in whom I have been enabled to encourage my self: Many Things I have met with in the past Time of my Apprenticeship both to cause my deep Humiliation, and to excite Thanksgiving, but I must in a great Part pass them by at present, endeavouring to bear them in my Thoughts, that so I may take Time while I have it, for that other great Work which, to my shame, is in a great measure yet to do.

My Esteem of, and Affection to God's Holy Ordinances I find encreased since I came to this Place; it was grievous to me to think of being kept at home on the Lords Days, as our Servants by their turns were, and therefore I got my Mother to request my Master that it might be otherwise with me; and it was Gods gracious Presence in his Ordinances, that my Soul was breathing after; I have many Times grudged my Self my Eating and Sleeping Time, when by this my Duty, Time would have been cut shorter: Though this stinking Flesh (to which this poor Soul of mine is full little beholden) hath sometimes hurg back from rising on Winter Lords-Day Mornings, to go to wait upon God, yet I think this is more to be charged upon the weakness of the Flesh, than the unwillingness of the Spirit, for it seldom kept me away, and

I have been much concerned at it afterwards, shaming my self for it before the Lord, but I never thought much at my self for any Acts of Self-denial of this Nature; and much more I have been willing to deny my Self the Time allowed me for idle Sports and Recreations; when I have had Liberty granted me without desiring it, as others of my Fellow-Servants have had; I have rather chose to spend the Time in God's Service; and when I have had a Prize of this Nature in my Eye, I have staid at home at my Work, that so I might with more Confidence desire Liberty then, which seldom was denied me; sometimes when I have gone to a Fast, and have been to come away in the midst of the Work, it hath so troubled me to leave it, that I was forced to resolve never to go at the beginning unless I could stay all the while, but to take the latter Part of the Day.

Of late Years I have been more solicitous and doubtful about the Estate of my Soul; for indeed, till of late I have gone on in a fine smooth way, enjoying (as I really thought at least) spiritual Communion with God in his Ordinances, and so ordinarily enjoyed inward Peace, unless a breach was made by some notable miscarriage, which I endeavoured to make up again: But of late I begun to fear, least that which I called Peace should prove no better than Security and Presumption at last. One while I feared my Case to be bad, because I did not fear it, having never been soundly put to it with any doubt in all my Life, which I have sometimes heard laid down as an ill Sign; but I was not long after that without my Doubts, for considering

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that I was a Child of Wrath by Nature, and the Necessity of Conversion, as that without it there is no Salvation; and further considering how great a change that makes, as from a State of Sin to a State of Grace, Terms as different as Heaven and Hell, and that therefore this change must needs be visible and remarkable; And further, thinking of the Experience of many Christians, who can say at such and such a Time, by such and such Means, the Lord begun to Work upon me, I begun to have sad Thoughts of my self, who can say nothing certainly, know not when or how any such great and saving change was wrought upon me; it came into my thoughts sometimes, what I have read and heard of some that were Sanctified early, even in their Infancy, and my proud Heart would fain have been fastning here, but I durst not, fearing that would prove but a sandy Foundation for me to build upon; good Mr. *Whitlock* gave me some Direction and Satisfaction when I went to him to be admitted to the Sacrament; He put the Question to me, Whether I knew the Time? I answered No; Whereupon he replied, that tho' it was a thing desirable and very comfortable when Christians could tell the Time of their Conversion, yet it was not a thing necessary: And so if I could but find such a change wrought it was well, though I could not tell the Time; and I have since met with further Satisfaction in what I find to this Purpose in Holy Mr. *Baxter's Dying Thoughts*, page 48. Mr. *Firmin's Real Christian*, page 13. Mr. *Hickman's Believers Duty towards the Spirit*, page 121. And therefore would be no longer curious in my Enquiries about this Matter, in which

I can never in an ordinary way obtain full Satisfaction, but rest satisfied if I can but find the Work done, though I cannot tell when and how, and not at once both Torment my own Soul, and gratifie and humour the Devil, who next to Grace, envieth a Christian's Peace and Comfort. Another Thing which gave rise to my Fears was, that I have not met with those strong Convictions as poor Sinners ordinarily do; When many others that have proved very eminent Christians, have met with very violent Pangs in the new Birth, I have come very easily by mine, if there be any such thing: I dread to think of flattering my self with ungrounded Hopes, and yet I would fear erring on the other Hand also; and to my great Satisfaction I begun to think, as I have been sometimes taught, that God is pleased to use various Methods in fetching poor straggling Sinners home to himself; some he draws in a more tender-loving, others in a more terrible way, snatching them as Fire-brands out of the Fire; and that if God have but drawn me savingly to himself, I ought rather to be thankful that he hath dealt so gently with me; and I have since met with a Passage in a Sermon of Young Mr. *Billingly*, which did yield me much Satisfaction as to my Fears, it was to this Purpose. *Early Converts have seldom those violent Pangs of Sorrow and Convulsions of Terrour which others feel in the New Birth; Christ draws them with a certain sweetness of Comfort, and many Times the Peace of such is much more settled, than theirs who come later home, that they have not those doubtings and questionings of the Work of God upon their Souls as those have who stay out longer.* And from

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a Passage in Mr. *Firmin's Real Christian*, Page
15.

I bless God I have not been wholly a stranger to the Thoughts of Death, and these have not been sick-bed Thoughts only, but when to the best of my knowledg I have been most healthful; neither were they sad, but some of the sweetest Thoughts that I have had; I say again, sweet Thoughts, for I still feel them to be so: sometimes when I thought I had Death in near view, my Heart hath given a sudden and joyful leap within me, hoping soon to be with Jesus Christ, the Language of my Soul being, *Even so, come Lord Jesus, come quickly!* Yet methought if the Lord had any Work or Service, he would please to imploy me in, I was content to wait his time; but as for any worldly hopes of mine, I would gladly have relinquished them all for Heaven: But alas! this hath not been my constant frame, I wish it had: The Lord knows, and Conscience thou knowest and wilt remember me of it, that when my spiritual Distempers have prevailed, which hath been too too frequently, it hath been quite otherwise, yet thus sometimes I have found it with me. But I doubt I have been too positive in my Conclusions about this matter, concluding that at the farthest I should not live beyond the time of my Apprenticeship: My Times are in God's hand to lengthen or shorten as he pleaseth, and it's not my part thus to measure them, but speedily to prepare for the certain, and yet the uncertain Period of them. Possibly this might be the effect of Melancholy, but as yet I cannot fully perswade my self that this is all, a little more time will better satisfy me. But suppose they should be so, yet if the Lord be pleased to quicken

quicken me by them, to make ready, I shall have cause to bless him for such melancholy Thoughts to my dying day: And I am sure if Death should catch me unprovided, I should be found speechless, and left without all excuse, having outlived my self, my own expectation, some years already.

Before I came to be an Apprentice I had some desires to have been a Minister, but was then quite discouraged, but since my Desires have been revived and much encreased, and I fear have sometimes risen to the height of sinful ones, as they have caused Discontentedness at my present condition, and unfitted me for the discharge of the Duties thereof, though I hope my ends in the main was right, which if I know my deceitful Heart, was, that I might be more constantly spiritually employed, and that I might be more serviceable unto God, as instrumental in the saving of poor Souls, which I look upon as the happiest Employment in the World: O how I have been affected sometimes when I have partaken of the Labours of some hopeful young Scholars, my Heart being at the same time full of Joy and Grief! O thrice happy Souls, thought I, are these, who are like to be blessed Instruments of glorifying God in promoting the recovery of poor lost Souls, while poor I, am like a Drone in the Hive; nay, a mere Cumber-ground, good for nothing! I cannot with my Pen express how my Heart hath been at such times affected: And with Shame and Grief I desire to remember and acknowledg it, that I have very much yielded to discontented Thoughts at my condition upon this account; so that sometimes my mind hath been so discomposed, that I have scarce

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known either what to do or think; sometimes I would think I might be a Minister still, notwithstanding what was past; but I kept all close to my self, which course I have found to be prejudicial to me in more cases besides this: At last I resolved, if I could not obtain Satisfaction my self, I would write to my Father about it; but considering the Troubles he was labouring under, and that if he should dislike my design, it would be like to encrease them; and thus whereas I should be a Comfort to him, I should prove a further Cross, and lay more load upon his Shoulders, whereas I should rather put mine to his Burden, and bear a part with him as I am able. This discouraged me from it, resolving rather to suffer my self: So to supply his place I begun to take my own Heart to task; sometimes I would be urging my self with the consideration of the Troubles poor Ministers (if faithful) are exposed to, which seem yet on the growing hand: But this was ineffectual, did not take off the edge of my Desires, but rather sharpened them. Then I would think what a great deal went to the making up an able faithful Minister, and how few of those Qualifications was to be found in me, and in how small a degree. This Consideration did much discourage me: Sometimes again I would think how dangerous a thing it is to go out of God's way, as his Presence and Blessing is hazarded by it: And that since his Providence had disposed otherwise of me, what strange Insolence it was for such a silly foolish thing, as I, to think of chusing better for my self; and how little hope there was that the Lord should honour me with doing him any Service there, if I should intrude, and run before I am sent.

sent. Sometimes again I would think how deficient I was in the discharge of the Duties of my present condition, how much Guilt I must take along with me; and that if I fall so short here, how little hope I could have of going thorough with a Ministers Task, which is far greater? Sometimes I would think of the fore-mentioned Particular, that my time was not like to be long here, and that did much quiet me: Methought I was willing to relinquish all my Projects for Heaven; but my last and most effectual Course for Satisfaction was the Duty of Prayer, wherein I earnestly begged of God, that if it was his Will and my Duty thus to change my Condition, that he would make way for it in his Providence; and if not, that he would quiet my Mind, and give a check to my discontented Thoughts. And in this the Lord was graciously pleased to hear me, for it was not long e'er I met with much Satisfaction, my Mind being on a sudden much calmed, which Serenity I have ever since enjoyed, though with some little Interruption. I confess, I know not what to think of my self about this thing; I am afraid there was too much of wretched Self at the bottom, tho it lay very much undiscovered, and I am sure I have very much miscarried about it, and yet methinks, I would bless God that such a thing as this was in my Heart, which I hope was right in the main.

The Form of his Covenanting with
God after his being at the
Lord's Supper, when seventeen
Years of Age.

After a solemn Renewal of my Covenant with
God in that blessed Ordinance, the Sacrament
of the Lord's Supper, I do most strictly bind and ob-
liege my self to the careful discharge of the Duties
following, which I cannot but see my self vastly want-
ing in.

I do now resolve upon a course of sincere and uni-
versal Holiness; that now I will endeavour to live to
him that died for me, and to live as one of his Re-
deemed ones should live. That since the Lord has
given me a taste of the bitterness of Sin, that I will
now keep up a closer Watch against all Sin; but espe-
cially the Sin that doth most easily beset me. And
since the Lord hath been pleased to manifest his Love
unto my Soul in and through the Lord Jesus Christ, I
do resolve, though with as deep a sense of my own
Weakness and Inability to do any thing as of my
self, together with the Falseness and Treachery of my
own Heart as I can get; yet by the help and assistance
of his Spirit and Grace (which I do most earnestly
implore) I say I do resolve to have greater care to
keep my self in the love of God, and not return wil-
lingly any more to Folly. That I will keep a closer
Watch over my Heart, my inward Thoughts and Af-
fections;

fections; together with my outward Carriage and Actions, endeavouring my whole Conversation may be void of Offence, both towards God and towards Man. Being careful that I offend not with my Tongue, that frothy unsavoury Discourse come not so frequently out of my Lips: But that my Discourse may be to Edification, may always tend to the good of my own and others Souls with whom I may converse, that my Speech in this Sense may bewray me to the ungodly World, that I am none of them, but a Disciple of Jesus Christ. And to see that my Actions do agree hereto, that it be my daily care to live piously towards God, and righteously towards others, and soberly towards my self. And to this end, I do resolve to call my Heart to an account constantly every Night, to judg of the Passages of the Day, by the Rule the Lord is pleased to give me in his Word: To call my self to an account about the discharge of religious Duties towards God, as Prayer and Meditation, &c. And for my stated Prayer, I do resolve to take more heed, that I get not a formal, customary frame of Heart, that I come not more out of Custom than Conscience; and that I will not take up with the Work done, the outward part of the Ordinance, unless I can meet with God therein: That I will endeavour to watch and strive more against vain proud Affectation, with all those Corruptions I find my self guilty of. And that I will labour for a lively Heart that may feel what with my Tongue I speak: That I will endeavour that Faith and Fervency may be mixed with all my Desires. And I will see that I neglect not ejaculatory Prayer, and see that it comes from the earnest Breathings of my Soul. That I will take more pains in serious godly Meditation: That I will be a more thinking Christian. And so in the discharge of every Duty I will endeavour to be more
 serious

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serious and diligent, looking both to the matter and manner of them : That I will be more diligent in preparation for Duty, and be very intent upon it : And that I will not content my self with the bare doing of any Duty, unless I can obtain and enjoy Communion with God in it.

And so that I will be more careful to discharge my Duty to others, those Duties, the Place and Relations, the Providence of God hath pleased to set me in, calls for : That I may so carry it, as to have a Conscience void of Offence, as towards God, so likewise towards Man : That I will labour after a merciful loving Frame and Disposition towards all Men ; learn to love my Enemies, to wish the best good I can possibly to them, which is their Conversion, in order to their eternal Salvation. But that they shall have the greatest share of my Love that are most like my dear Saviour : That I will do whatever I can for the good of others, the Salvation of others Souls, improve my Talents more for the Glory of God, be a shining Light to others, lay out my self now in my Youth, considering how much precious time, even seventeen Years, I have spent, and to little purpose, God knows.

*So likewise, that I will endeavour to live soberly towards my self, that neither by the neglect of those outward Mercies the Lord is pleased to vouchsafe, nor by the abuse of them, I turn them to my hurt. So now as I am a living Monument of God's Mercy, in order that I may be a lively Instrument of his Praise, I do resolve to take a strict account of my Ways by his Help, and to try my Thoughts, Words and Actions every Night by his Word. And for my Help herein I look upon it a good way to be oft reflecting upon my self in this manner ; Will this be Comfort at Night ? So by calling my Heart to account
here,*

here, I may be preparing to give up my account to God at the great Day; even so preparing, that it may be with Joy and not with Grief. So here I do (in a most solemn way and manner, as in the Presence of that God that will e'er long take an account of me for this very thing) most strictly bind and tie my self to the careful Discharge of these Duties, with an eye to the Penalty due in case of the Forfeiture of this my Covenanting-Bond, which is eternal Misery, which is due to the least Sin: After sincere and earnest Prayer to God, that he would be pleased to vouchsafe his Help and Assistance, without whom I can do nothing.

Witness my Hand,

Nottingham,
June 4, 1682.

Jo. Barrett.

C H A P. II.

Containing the Description of the State of his Soul, with some Hints by way of Preface concerning the Duty of Self-Examination.

IT pleased the blessed God to create Man at first in a holy and happy Estate; but his Estate by the Fall is become sinful and miserable, tho' not altogether hopeless and remediless; for such was his Pity and Compassion, and Divine Bounty towards poor offending and Hell-deserving Creatures, that he gave his only begotten Son to be a Saviour and Redeemer to all those that will accept of him, on those low and gracious Terms whereon he is offered in the Gospel.

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spel. But yet alas! notwithstanding this wise Plot of the blessed Trinity for Man's Salvation and eternal Happiness, how many are there that will not be perswaded to come unto him, that so they may have Life, for whom it had been better, had they never been born; or had Christ never done and suffered so much as to make their Salvation attainable? How necessary then is it, especially in such a day as this, that I make a diligent search and enquiry into the Estate of my Soul, to see whether I have that which will entitle me to Christ and Salvation by him, even Regeneration, the enlightning and healing Work of his Spirit? or whether I be not yet a Stranger to, and at a distance from him? I hope through the Free Grace and distinguishing Mercy of God, a good Work hath been begun upon my Heart; yet by reason of the weakness of Grace, strength of Corruption, and violence of Temptation, especially after Relapses into Sin, I find many Doubts and Fears to arise in my Soul, many times being ready to question whether the Root of the Matter be in me or no: Whether the saving change by Grace hath passed upon me or no? My Conscience casting a *What dost thou more than others* in my teeth. So I thought it my duty, and a course likely to prove very advantageous to me, (however I find matters with me) with all serious diligence (not making it the Work of an hour or a day, but spending many serious, deep, and deliberate Thoughts about it, as a matter of great Moment) to see whether I can find any thing of the blessed Genius and sweet Disposition of a Christian in my Soul? and this to write down, that it may be of use to me when under the like Temptation. This
Heart-

With Hints of Self-Examination. 63

Heart-searching Work I find my Heart exceeding loth to be brought unto; though an enlightened Conscience, in the matter, will not let me be quiet without doing something; yet I am ready to be flighty, careless, and perfunctory in my search (which will not do with a deceitful Heart) without making a diligent Scrutiny into the secret and dark Corners of my Soul; which I am sure will not fall in amongst Marks of Sincerity, but do much to prove the contrary; yea I think will do it absolutely, if in a prevailing degree: Bankrupts care not for looking into their Account-Books. That part of my Body which I cannot endure to have touched, I conclude is not sound and right. Yet I would not by this be quite discouraged, make a stop here, and draw Conclusions from this, without making further enquiry into the matter, because I have heard this complained of, as the Malady of many honest Souls; especially when I consider how this thwarts with, and lies cross to the Interest of corrupt Nature, Reminders of which there is in the best while here, especially in such unsanctified Souls as mine is.

I find my self further discouraged from this Work, from the consideration of the Difficulty of it, by reason of the fathomless Depths of Deceit that is in my Heart. Good Lord! Who can know such a Heart as mine except thy self? And it becomes more difficult to me, because I have been so great a Stranger to it. Yet think I, The more difficult the more excellent. And the Advantage which I may reasonably expect from a serious diligent management of it, will quite out-balance all its Difficulties, and Delays will encrease the Difficulty. And further I am not to
engage

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engage in it in my own Strength, and why may I not be enabled to do all things through Christ strengthening me? And now dear God and Father, in and through Jesus Christ, do not here remember against me former Iniquities, in refusing thy Calls, despising thy Counsels, and disregarding thy Reproofs in this matter; so as to be thereby provoked, not to answer now I call, and to refuse to be found of me, now I desire to seek thee with my whole Heart. Do not leave me to my poor, dark, dead, confused and hypocritical Self: but do thou bestow upon thy poor, unworthy Servant, who confesses he deserves not so much as the least outward favour at thy hands, a Divine Effusion of Heavenly Light and Love in this my needful time, for his sake in whom I trust. And seeing it is laid down in God's good Word, and hath often been by his faithful Ambassadors laid before me, as my great and necessary Duty, and exceeding great Privilege to be good betimes, to consecrate the flower of my Days to God. I desire to make this the first part of my Work, to reflect upon my past Life, to look back to my young Years, so far as I am able; and impartially to collect and set down those things I can gather any thing from, without needless Curiosity either in my Phrase, it being for my own Eyes and Use, and not anothers, though writ in long hand; or being too much concerned about reducing things to their proper Heads and Places, it being a thing very difficult, if not impossible for one of my Capacity, and little tending to the nature and design of this Work, which is not to discover Gifts and Parts, wherein I am so low and mean (though to write my Thoughts freely, I find

find too great a tange of such low and corrupt Principles and Ends, in this sacred Work, which with abhorrence I Strive and Pray against) But the sparks of true and saving Grace, if yet enkindled in my Soul.

And here I desire to possess my Mind with this previous Consideration, that it has graciously pleased God to chuse out such Parents and Relations for me, and cast my Lot in such a Family, where I have had many precious Advantages for my Soul, where I might have been as good as I would : Oh I have sat under the droppings of the Sanctuary ! I have been the Child of many Instructions, Reproofs and Prayers, for these two Reasons.

1. To keep me Humble, that if I find any thing I can draw Comfort from, the swellings of Pride and Self-conceitedness may be kept down ; Who made me differ ? What have I that I have not received ? Yea, how much more might I have received, had I not been unfaithful in the Improvement of those means, and helps I have enjoyed ? Unfaithful to God, and to the Interest of my precious and immortal Soul ?

2. As to humble, so to quicken me ; that when I discover my great fallings short in my Attainments, considering the means vouchsafed to me, it may quicken me to greater Diligence for the Future. Oh ! Where might I have been ? What Knowledge and Grace might I have attained to, had I but had Wisdom to improve those Prizes that have been put into my Hand ? Good Lord ! how many are there, who have been below me in Means, who are far beyond me in Attainments. How many have got the

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start of me a great deal in Heavens-way, who have had more to hinder them, and less to forward them than I have had? How unlike am I to such a Father? Those Vertues that shew forth themselves in him, how do the contrary Vices too manifestly appear in me? Who could know me, if they only looked into my Life and Conversation; especially, if they could see my Heart and Thoughts, and did not hear my Name? And how unlike am I to the Person, for and to whom God hath appeared so wonderfully Gracious? For whom he hath done more, than for many of his own Dear Children, who have better deserved, and would have better improved it? Now, Oh that a Sence hereof, may both humble and quicken my proud, yet lazy and wretchedly indifferent Soul.

And now Oh dear God, the God of all Grace, the Father of Mercy, and the God of all Comfort, I desire to look up to, and wait upon Thee for thy Divine Assistance, thou knowest I desire to take Thee along with me in all my Undertakings, but especially in this of so great difficulty and concern. Oh for some Divine Influences from Thee the God of Life, and Light, and Love! Oh for an influx of Heavenly Light and Love in this Time of my Need! Help me in this great work of serious Self-Reflection and Examination, against all low and corrupt Principles and Ends, against all Partiality and Hypocrisie, against all slightness and carelessness, and grant that my Affections and Endeavours may be suitable to the discovery of my Estate. If upon serious Enquiry I have cause to fear my Case is as yet bad, and dangerous, humble me
for

for my Sin with all the sad Aggravations of it; and help me seriously, deliberately and speedily to flee from the Wrath to come, by acquainting my self with Thee in and through Jesus Christ, that so I may be at Peace, and have much good come unto me. And if upon the other Hand, I can find any good ground to Hope that my Soul is brought into a safe and secure Estate by Jesus Christ, as thy Holy Spirit hath already witnessed objectively, in working those gracious Qualifications in my Soul which are the Conditions of the Covenant of Grace. So now let it (though by me a grieved Spirit) witness effectively, irradiating my Soul with a Grace-discovering Light, so shining upon his own Work, as may powerfully and effectually convince me of the same. Oh vouchsafe to thy unworthy Servant, the Joy of thy Salvation! And let all the Comfort I have or shall ever attain unto, influence me more and more to Holiness of Heart and Life, *Amen.*

It highly concerns me to do my best to know how Matters stand between God and my Soul, and how its like to go with me in the other World. Here in order to my Satisfaction, I am to consider, that lapsed Mankind is now under a Law or Covenant of Grace, so that though perfect sinless Obedience be still my Duty, yet it is not insisted on as the Condition of my Justification and Salvation; God is graciously pleased in this Covenant to accept of Sincerity, which is the lowest step that his Honour and the great Ends of Redemption will allow him to take; and therefore my great Work here, is to enquire after the Sincerity of my Heart, to see

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whether the chief prevailing Bent and Bias of my Soul be towards God, and Jesus Christ, and Heaven yea, or no; and seeing the final Sentence will be passed upon me in Judgment, according to my Performance, or Non-performance of the Conditions of this Covenant: Therefore I conclude, that as I find Matters with me here, (upon the strictest search that I can make, after earnest Prayer to God) I may warrantably, yea, and ought to draw up a Conclusion concerning mine Estate, and pass a righteous Judgment on my self.

Nottingham, Octob. No. 1686.

*A True and Impartial Description of the
Estate of my Soul, so far as I can discern it.*

I Find the Lord hath by his Spirit been at Work upon my Soul, convincing me of my sinful and miserable Estate by Reason of that original and universal Corruption of Nature which I brought with me into the World, and the many actual and aggravated Sins and Transgressions of my Life; He hath opened my Eyes to see an inconceivable Evil in Sin, and so that it deserves an inconceivable and endless Punishment, so that it lieth upon my Soul as a burden too heavy for me to bear; He hath made me sensible not only of the guilt of Sin, but of its Power and Pollution too, though I am not at all Times alike sensible, nor indeed at any Time in that Measure and Degree which
is

is my Duty and Desire; I would fain be eased of this Burden, and get rid of Sin; but alas! it cleaveth fast unto me; I am really Convinced that I am a most miserable, lost, undone Creature in my self: And I see and feel such wants as no Creature can supply, such Burdens as no Creature can remove; Sin hath made me miserable, and God alone can make me Happy.

I am convinced that God is the chief good, and accordingly (if I know my own Heart) I have chosen him for my Portion, and place my chief Happiness in him; I do from my very Heart utterly disclaim and renounce all other Things whatsoever as my Portion and All, resolving never to be put off with them, to acquiesce no where but in God himself; He is the Center of my Soul; I prize him above all, and hope I shall be ready to part with that which is dearest to me, rather than forsake him; I think I can truly say with the Psalmist [*Whom have I in Heaven but Thee? And there is none on Earth that I desire in Comparison of Thee;*] I find more sweet Satisfaction and Delight in Communion with him here, than in any Earthly Enjoyment: And the blessed Vision and Fruition of him in Heaven, is that Thing my Heart is most set upon: It is many Times a sore Heart-break to me, to think that I should in so great a measure live as without him in the World; and an Eternal Separation from him hereafter, I more dread than any other Thing.

The Lord hath revealed his Son Jesus Christ unto me, as the Way unto Himself: And so far as I can discern, I am unfeignedly willing to close with him on Covenant-Terms, yea, and that I have done it already; and I do now

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upon serious mature Deliberation, own and renew this my former Choice; I do heartily with thankfulness embrace this his most rich and gracious Offer held forth to me in the Gospel, taking him for my alone Lord and Saviour; renouncing all Carnal Confidence, I am resolved to abide by his Merits, and trust in him alone as my Righteousness with the Father; and I also take him for my Lord and King, to free me not only from the Condemning, but as well from the Commanding Power of Sin, which I as heartily desire, to sanctify my Rule, and Govern me by his Word and Spirit; and I do as solemnly, deliberately and chearfully resign my self into his Hands, to be saved by him in his own Way; I am unfeignedly willing to have the Lord Jesus Christ in all his Offices, with all his Benefits, and to give back my poor All to him; and it is a great Grief to me, that I have not Power to give him present actual Possession of so much as I would have him have: Lord, be pleased to take that which I would fain give Thee, but alas cannot!

My Corruptions are very strong, I am oft sadly foiled and run down by them, which hath sorely shaken my Confidence; yet I hope (upon the strictest search that I can make) that the Interest of God and Christ is predominant in my Soul, and that Sin doth not Reign but Tyrannize; I had much rather obey perfectly, than have a Dispensation to break any of his Laws; I know no Sin in my Heart, but I habitually more hate than love it: I Watch and Pray, and strive against it with that little Strength I have, and when I am worsted by it, it is against my settled Purpose: I do not yield my

my self up as a Servant to Sin, to obey it; I find there is a contrary Principle in my Heart, which is kept alive, and gets above again when the Violence of the Temptation is over: So that I am not reconciled to Sin, nor for a sinful Course; I would not Part with my good Master Jesus Christ, for the dearest Lust I have; and I can heartily Bless God for the most smarting Afflictions, which help me forward in a Work of Mortification; and where the Heart and Will is more against Sin than for it, I hope it shall not prove Mortal.

I take Notice of the inward stirrings of Corruption, and am grieved at, and humbled for them; I watch my Heart as narrowly as I can, that so I may observe the first Motions of Sin to suppress them; I endeavour to nip Sin in the Bud: My Heart is very prone to sinful wicked Thoughts, they oft crowd in upon me, but they are a Burden to me; I cannot keep them out, but I endeavour to cast them out; I would not suffer them to lodge within me: And I am never so easie and well-pleased with my self, as when I can at any Time find my Heart in a good Frame.

I Hope I truly Love God, as God; that I Love him for his essential Beauty and Loveliness, and not only for his Benefits: That I Love him not only as a merciful, but also as he is a Holy God; and I do also hope, that he hath the Supremacy in my Heart and Affections: I think I may be sure of this, that I do really esteem and prefer, chuse and embrace him above all; I never think I Love him enough, or serve him enough, or that I am near enough to him, and enjoy enough of him: But alas! it

grieves me many times to think, that my Heart should be so estranged from him as I find it is; that I should think no more frequently and delightfully of him; yet I do not banish the Thoughts of God out of my Mind, no they are welcome Guests to me, I am glad of them: And I frequently shame my self before the Lord, for the Disaffection of my Soul towards him, which appears and discovers it self to me this way, and am striving to work it out.

I love to love God; I taste much Sweetness in, and am exceedingly delighted with the warm and lively Exercise of this precious Grace; I am glad at my very Heart when I can at any time feel that I do indeed love him; I am never so well pleased with my self as then; and I long to love and enjoy him perfectly in Heaven, as my chief Felicity; and I desire the manifestation of his Love to my Soul chiefly for this end, that so I may have my Heart more drawn out in love to him.

Indeed I can add nothing to him. If I be righteous, what do I give him? But I find my self exceedingly pleased and delighted many times, when I think seriously that there are such and such infinitely glorious Excellencies and Perfections in him; it is a reviving to my poor Heart many times when I am under painful Misery, to think that my dear God is so infinitely happy in himself, and will be so for ever.

I love and bear good Will to all Men; I have no rooted settled Hatred of any Enemy in the World; I am inwardly pleased when I have an opportunity of doing good to such as may have been ready to lay hold of any opportunity to do me harm; though alas! sometimes my Passions
are

are raised, and by little foolish things, and it may be are boisterous and unruly for a while, yet I pray and strive against them, and get above them. A meek and a quiet Spirit is in God's sight of great price, and so it is in mine, and full feign would I have it. I am many times sadned at Heart, when I think of the doleful State of this sinful World: and it would greatly rejoyce me to hear of the progress of the Gospel, and of its Success in the Conversion of Souls. I read that my heavenly Father doth good to all, and that Jesus Christ went about doing good, and I would feign imitate in my poor measure. It is a great burden to me that I should live so unprofitably to others; I desire that all I converse with, may be one way or other better for me.

I love the godly in a more especial manner, as such, and according to the degree of Holiness I can discern in them; where I discover any thing of real Piety in any, I do highly esteem and dearly love them for it, though they may differ from me in some odd bie-Opinions. I delight in the Communion and Society of the godly, I would be a Companion of them that fear the Lord; I really sympathize with them in their Sufferings, even with such of them as I have not seen, and could sometimes even wish myself in their stead; I am ready to relieve such of them as are in want according to my Ability, and am glad when I have an opportunity to give an Evidence of my Love this way: and I hope I should be willing to suffer for their sakes, when the Lord shall make it my Duty; and the Death of such is a means to wean me from this World, and to make me think the more delightfully of Heaven.

I

I find in my Heart much Deceit, in reference to the fore-mentioned Particulars; I am too ready to make the Estimation others have of me, and the Love and Respect they shew to me, the Rule of mine to them, (O what a base rotten deceitful Heart is this of mine! O wretched Man that I am, how long must I be thus plagued with it? Who shall deliver me from it?) But I watch this naughty Heart of mine, and labour against this sinful Distemper as I discover it, and hope I am getting ground of it by some particular Instances.

I have great cause to be humbled under a sense of my base inordinate Self-love, my narrow private-Spiritedness, the Lord forgive it to me! That I am no more solicitous and concerned about the advancing of God's Honour and Glory in the World: That the Interest of a dear Redeemer lieth no nearer to my Heart: That I am so taken up in caring for my own things, and am no more concerned for the publick common Good of all, especially of the Church of Christ; yet I find there is some (and I hope) real Concernedness upon my Spirit for these things; when I am my self, it's not a pleasure, but a great Grief unto me, to see or hear God dishonoured, his Name blasphemed, his holy Ways vilified; and I can very heartily pray that his Name may be hallowed, his Kingdom come, his Will be done.—And I desire no higher Honour or greater Happiness in the World, than to be made use of by him to serve and glorify him my self: And I am concerned for the good of others, especially for *Jerusalem's* Welfare, and am grieved at the Calamities that befall any of my Brethren, especially when whole Societies of them

them are suffering, and for those Sins and Provocations that bring such things upon them: The heavy Tidings I heard this Evening from poor *Piedmount* go very near me.

I would not be guilty of doing wrong to any Man, but chuse rather to receive it: Sometimes when a thing hath been doubtful to me, and I could not well be resolved, tho I have had equal Reason to conclude the right might be on my side, as on the other Parties, yet I have freely parted with the thing, for fear it should have been otherwise.

My Heart is often out of frame, every thing off the Hinges in my Soul, scarce one Wheel going right: When it is thus with me, I am ready to ravel all again, and doubt of every thing: but I am not easy and well till I get in again; I am not as I would be, not in my Element when out of a gracious frame: And this is my great Comfort that I have to do with so gracious and merciful a God in and through a Redeemer, and am under such a Pardoning Covenant: And I hope, Lord, thou wilt not take me at the worst: O, remember me in Mercy! Pity me as a Father pitieth his Children, and spare me as a Man spareth his Son that serveth him! *Amen.*

January 2, 1689, vel 90.

Upon as serious a review of the foregoing Particulars, and reflection upon my self, as I could bring this naughty Heart of mine unto, I find ground to hope well concerning my spiritual Estate; That tho I cannot tell when or how it was done, yet that there is a saving Change wrought

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wrought in me, that I am indeed passed from Death to Life.

I am more confirmed in my Hopes as to the main Point, that the Lord hath brought me to a saving Acquaintance with my dear, sweet, and gracious Redeemer; tho I am sometimes clouded with Fears, yet I cannot discover any just ground to question the Sincerity of my Heart in this, a real Willingness to close with him on Covenant-terms. Indeed I find it to my Sorrow, that there is in my Heart a world of Sin: but I think not one Sin reserved, not one but what I am freely willing, and heartily desirous to be rid of. I lay the whole weight and stress of my Salvation upon him, and I dare not for any thing venture my Soul on any other bottom. He is truly precious to me, in my eye the Pearl of greatest Price: I would not quit all hopes of an Interest in him for a world; though alas, I lie very loosely and unevenly on him, and am oft shaking and tottering, yet this is my Grief: I would fain get more real and full Conformity to him, fain cleave and adhere more firmly and constantly to him; and I would not fall off from my Foundation for ten thousand Worlds. Now the Scripture saith, *That whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.*

Indeed since my writing the forementioned Particulars, my Corruptions have been frequently rebelling; Enemies that I thought sometimes had received even their Deaths Wound; alas, they suddenly pert up the Head, and surprize me! Lord, I perceive I must not put off my Armour yet! Satan hath been assaulting me most fiercely and unweariedly in an extraordinary manner: The Lord hath been humbling me, by
letting

letting me see what is in my Heart, and yet magnifying his Grace in restraining and supporting of me, in keeping alive the Seed of Grace in my Heart to this day. It is very sad there should be so much Sin yet remaining in me, but it doth me no hurt but good to see it; I hope it is in order to my Cure: And the Lord hath so ordered it, that the Out breach of one sinful Distemper is helping forward the Cure of others. And though I am ready to faint and sink under my Discouragements sometimes, yet I hope for all this that blessed time will come at last, when I shall be able to set my foot in the Neck of that old Serpent; when this Body of Sin, those Corruptions which I see and feel to my Sorrow from day to day, which makes my Life bitter, bitter to me, Time will come when I shall see no more of them for ever.

At some particular Seasons, in particular Cases, I have been much on the losing, at other times on the gaining hand: But in the main I would hope I have rather got than lost: though (alas!) the degree of my Growth is so small, that I can scarce discern it. Life there is still I find, blessed be God for that. But O my Deadness! O my Barrenness! I am but a Shrub still, a Dwarf still! This is my real Burden, blessed be God for that too: There may be somewhat of real Growth where it is not very discernable: That there is no more, Lord, let it both humble and quicken me for the future!

I think I have clear and safe ground and warrants from the holy Scriptures (in which I have laid down before me the Law by which the Lord rules, and will hereafter judg me) to conclude that according as the habitual prevailing bent of
my

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my Heart is, so he doth now judg concerning my State at present, and accordingly will his awful Judgment at the great Day determine it for ever. And further, I think it is as unquestionable that the main Tenour, Scope and Drift of my Life is the most clear and undeniable Evidence of the former, *scil.* which way the prevailing Bent and Bias of my Heart stands.

But here alas! when I consider seriously how few and feeble my regular Motions are; and on the other hand, how many false, wry steps I am daily taking, my Heart doth many times fear and tremble.

Mr. *Whitlock* some time since laid down a few Marks, which I think are unquestionably scriptural; and putting my Heart to the Test by them, (after earnest Prayer to God) I find that I cannot without bearing false witness against my self, deny but that they do, in some measure of Sincerity at least (though not in that degree that I desire) agree with the feeling Experience of my Soul, as Face answers Face in a Glass: And therefore I turn them into Evidences to help to confirm my Faith, and to further and encrease my Joy and Rejoicing in the Lord: Assist me Lord, in drawing them into true shape, and then breath on them; O breath on them, that they may have Life in them. The Notes were brought in under an use of Examination, to help me to discover what are the ways I walk in, whether the ways of Sin, or the ways of Holiness, and so whether I be of the Number of the Just or no: *Hos. 14. ult. The Just shall walk in them.* The Notes were these:

1. Enquire what ways you have the highest Esteem for.

2. Have

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2. Have you chosen the ways of God, and are not merely drawn into them by the Power of Education, or from other carnal Principles?

3. What ways do you find the greatest Content and Satisfaction in?

4. Do you labour to be in Motion, not only to have Grace, but to exercise it, and to make Progress therein? And now,

1st. After serious Debate with my own Heart, again and again, and earnest Prayer to God the Searcher of it, that he would discover the Truth of the Matter to me, I do find this, that I do really esteem and prefer God and Christ, Holiness and Heaven above the World and Flesh, and all the Riches, Honours, Pleasures and Delights thereof, I really look upon God in Christ as the best Portion, Heaven as the best Inheritance, and the way of Holiness (the King's High-way thither, chalked out in his blessed Word) take it in its greatest Latitude, Height and Strictness, as really the best, better than any the contrary ways of Sin and Vanity, taking them at the greatest Advantage. Of all the Inhabitants of the Earth I do really esteem those as the best, the most truly wise and happy, who have chosen, and according to their choice have this God in Christ for their Portion, this Heaven for their Inheritance and Home, and are walking towards that good Land in the narrow Path, according to the strictest Rules of Holiness; notwithstanding they may at present lie hid under Obscurity, Poverty, Disgrace, or the like: Yea, I do really esteem these things not only as best in themselves, and as best for others; but also as best for my own self: And though I am, alas! so poor and low in Spirituality, (O that I was
but

but as poor in Spirit) yet considering what I have in present Possession, and especially in future Hopes, I do solemnly profess unto and before the God of Heaven, that I would not exchange Estates with any of the greatest, most renowned, and prosperous profane Monarchs upon the face of the whole Earth, was it at this Instant offered to me: No; A God for me, a Christ for me, Holiness and Heaven for me, O Lord, thou knowest! And so,

2. I think I am clear in this, that I have been enabled by divine Grace, deliberately, freely and heartily to choose and pitch upon God and Christ, Holiness and Heaven, renouncing the contrary. The Lord hath made me see and taste that intrinsic Excellency and Goodness in Religion and Godliness, in its blessed Author's ways and end, as hath laid me under a sweet but irresistible Force and Necessity to choose, embrace, and love them for themselves when separated from all carnal Principles, Motives and Ends whatsoever. And I do now with great Alacrity and Joyfulness of Soul profess and declare unto thee, O thou Searcher of Hearts, that I do yet stand to this my former deliberate, free, hearty and delightful Choice, and that I do desire now actually in a solemn manner to renew it: I know indeed, and must acknowledg this, that there is a world of Hypocrisy in this naughty Heart of mine. But this I know too, and the Lord knows it also, that I would not for a world relinquish that part of Religion which lieth quite out of any Mortals view.

Indeed I prosecute this my Choice very poorly, but this is the daily Grief and Burden of my Soul. I must further acknowledge, that I am very

ry often stepping aside and falling into Sin: But this I think, I can sincerely and truly say, that Sin is the thing I would not; that it is against my deliberate, hearty and resolved Choice.

3. I do find and am fully perswaded of this, that my greatest Content, Satisfaction and Delight is in God, his good Ways and People that walk therein. When I can but enjoy God, my Soul resteth in him with that Satisfaction and Delight, which is unspeakably sweet; as a Bird in the Air, as a Fish in the Water is in its Element, so is my Soul when with its God: When I can but at any Time indeed get near unto God in an Ordinance, O methinks! I am then where I would be, its then with me as I would have it! Lord, thou art the Centre of my Soul. What hast thou done unto me? Is it not some gracious saving Touch of thine that hath made it so: Surely it must be thus with me as I have said, unless I be deceived in that which I have felt, tasted, experienced a Hundred, and a Thousand Times; it must, it must? O my Soul! How wilt thou Love and Bless this thy dear Delight? Indeed I must Confess, I meet with many sad, O sad Interruptions here; O how often I loose my Taste? O how oft I grow careless and neglect my God? Though sometimes when my Soul is ravish'd with the ineffable Delight I find in him, I am ready to think it impossible I should do so any more; but alas! How soon I find my self sadly mistaken? O how often by my Sin, I grieve the Holy Spirit, that when I come to Holy Ordinances, I cannot find him whom my Soul loveth? And then those walks of his are most ghastly and afflictive to me which before was my

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Souls Delight: But my Conscience bears me witness, that when it is so, I am out of my Element, like a Fish upon the Land, restless and uneasy; I am never well, till I get in with my God again, and O! how doth my poor Heart, even as it were, leap within me for Joy when once it comes to that?

4. As to Motion, Exercise and Growth, I see here abundance of that which is matter of deep Humiliation and heavy Complaint; O the inactivity of Grace in my Soul! How oft that the Wheels stand still! Not a Motion Heavenward to be felt of a great while, my spiritual Pulse intermitting much more than my bodily one, though that be somewhat singular, for the irregularity and uncertainty of its Motion too: And O how weak and languid my Motions Godward and Heaven-ward are at best? And O my dwarfishness in Grace, and my too great Contentedness to have it so? But the Lord knows, and my daily Groans, Prayers and Tears Witness for me, that I would fain have it otherwise, and I yet live in Hopes that it will be better with me shortly: And moreover, I think upon the strictest search I am able to make, that since the last Time I took a more solemn View of my State; Notwithstanding, at particular Times my Corruptions have prevailed again, and again, and Temptations proved too hard for me, the Devil following me so closely and maliciously, as though he had not another Soul on Earth besides to mind; and so though at particular Times I have been declining and losing ground, yet in the main, I hope, I have been gaining: I hope my Knowledge, Repentance, Faith, Love, Humility and Zeal, and other
Graces

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Graces are somewhat more extensive and solid, my spiritual Experiences considerably increased, my Resolutions more fixed; Come Life, come Death, come what will, I have deliberately, solemnly and delightfully chosen the Lord, and he shall be my God, my Portion, my All, both here and for ever, *Amen.* So be it.

Dec. 7. 1695.

Joseph Barret.

C H A P. III.

Containing many choice Experiences.

Former Experiences for my Future Use.

I.

Sept. 89.

THE first Holy Duties which God was pleased to make the clearest, fullest and sweetest discoveries of himself to my Soul in, was Secret Prayer, and Singing of *Psalms.*

II.

When I am the lowest, have the deepest Sence of my own sinfulness and unworthiness, am fullest of self-abasing Thoughts, then am I wont to enjoy the sweetest Communion with God.

III.

My Heart hath this bad haunt, which I could never yet break it of; after the greatest and sweetest Enlargements in Holy Duties, it's apt to crave, and without a great deal of Care and Watchfulness, to take the greatest Liberty.

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IV. I

IV.

I cannot but sadly observe one very bad Property of my bad Heart; It is frequently apt to be worst, when it should be best.

V.

I have some Troubles, but ~~a~~ many Mercies, yet I find my Heart is prone, to pore more upon one Trouble, yea, though it be but a supposed one, created by my own Melancholy Phansie; than upon ~~a~~ many real weighty Mercies, which stand by as unobserved.

VI.

I have suffered more by playing with a Temptation, though I had an inward Abhorrence of the Sin, and was kept from closing with it, or any actual Inclination to it; yet trifling with the Temptation, and not resisting of it so vigorously and speedily as I ought, hath caused more smart to my poor Soul, than all the outward Afflictions that ever beset me in this World.

VII.

I have been very low sometimes, even so low that I have been ready to envy the Happiness of a Dog, or any Creature before me in the Streets. And I observe this, that many Times Grace is high and lively, when my Soul is very low as to any sensible Comfort, unless it be when I am quite born down with Fears, Temptations and Troubles: And the Lord sees good for a Time to leave me to sink under them. I can remember several Times when I have been walking in Darkness, scarce discerning any Light of Comfort, nothing but Terrour, which hath sometimes made my very Flesh to tremble, when I have been most afraid of any Sin, and have not been able to endure in the Company where God hath been dishonoured,

honoured, his Name blasphemed, and have been ready to over-run my self (had it been possible) when I have felt my Corruptions crawling within. When an Injection or Temptation from Satan, hath startled, terrified and affrighted me, as though he had visibly appeared to me, when I have Prayed till I have almost lost my Sight with Weeping, and have laboured at it till Blood hath issued freely from my Nose, and my Inwards have seemed ready to come up, till I have at length felt something come warm from Heaven to my Heart, which hath made my very Soul ready, as it were, to leap out into my Fathers Bosom, and so dark Night hath at an instant been turned into Noon-day, a kind of Hell turned into a little Heaven in my Soul. Lord, let me feel Humility, Faith, Love, Joy and Praise-working, when I remember thy loving kindnesses of Old !

VIII.

I am never so distressed, as when my Heart is so straitned and penned up that I cannot Pray. If I can but get vent there, let my Troubles be what they will I find ease,

IX.

Sometimes I have been a little distressed this way, when I have been about the Business of my particular Calling, I have been followed with motions to Pray, and that very unseasonably sometimes, and when I have not closed with such Motions, it hath troubled me afterwards, fearing I had thus quenched the Spirit. There might possibly be something of a Temptation in this. And yet I have observed many Times, when I have prudently snatched a little from the World this way ; I have had marvellous sweet incomes from God, which have made it better with my Soul all the Day after.

X.

Mercies are sweetest to me when they come in a way of Prayer; the very same Mercies, when they seem to come in a more ordinary way of Providence, I know not how methinks, have not near that relish and savouriness in them, as when they come in as Answers of Prayer, for then I would take them as special tokens of my heavenly Fathers Love, and that I have his Ear. And the Love of God in a Mercy, Oh that is sweeter in it self, and sweeter to my Soul than the Mercy it self.

XI.

Afflictions are not tooth-some, but I find they are very wholesome. I need them as much as I need my Bread; I cannot over-look my heavenly Father's Love and Care in this respect; whenever I make an Out from him, I am sure to meet with some Cross, some Affliction or other to send me home again; and I find they have this Effect upon me, and so have real cause and desire, heartily to bless God for Afflictions, as well as for any of his Mercies. O how I am mistaken when I think my heavenly Physician is killing me, when he is but letting me Blood, to save my Life! That he is become my Enemy, when he is but changing the Expressions of his Love. A Father sometimes is whipping and correcting his Child, as well as stroaking and embracing, and is a tender Father still, and God much more; and therefore he is to be thought well of and loved, notwithstanding, yea, the more for these; and though they be not for the present joyous but grievous, yet I would not change my present State, wherein God's Providence towards me is chequered with seasonable, needful and sanctified Afflictions, for
one

one wherein I should be wholly exempted from them (supposing my need of them the same) no not if I might have the Crown of *England* with it.

XII.

If I do get to Heaven at last, I shall have as great Reason to set the Crown of Glory upon the Head of Free-Grace, as any poor Creature in the World. And I am apt to think when I once come thither, it will shine forth in me with as much brightness and splendour as in any. Not that I expect a greater Charge of Glory to my self, but by Reason of my great unworthiness, and strange prodigious frowardness, Gods free and powerful Grace will more clearly appear in my Salvation, than in the Salvation of others. So sometimes I am thinking, as though blessed Angels and Saints too should look on me with wonder, and say how come you here? To which I Answer, O free Grace indeed brought me among you, so great and astonishing hath been the Love of God to me, that he hath carried it towards me, as though he was resolved to save me, let it cost him what it would; and the only Reason why he thus loved me was, because he loved me.

XIII.

I find by Experience the wise Man is in the right of it, when he tells me, what a poor, vain, empty unsatisfactory Thing the Creature is. I have been always ready to say so, as others are. But I profess for my own Part, I have found it no easie matter really to think so, and act accordingly, when I have cast my Eye upon such or such a Creature-Comfort or Enjoyment at a distance, I have been ready to think, Oh that's a fine thing! a brave thing! there's surely a great deal of Comfort and Happiness in such Things, till I come

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nearer them, and my own Experience teaches me otherwise. And sometimes the Confutation of this foolish mistake of mine costs me dear.

XIV.

Both Ends laid together, I think I have enjoyed least in those Creature-Comforts I have expected most from; when I have set my Heart upon, or grown over-fond of any thing in Expectation or Possession, the Lord hath usually met me either with a disappointment of it, or a Cross in it. From which I would learn, not to be over-eager in my Desires, after any worldly Comfort I have not; as also to take heed of over-hearting such as I have.

XV.

My Corruptions and Temptations are vexing me from Day to Day, that I can scarce have a quiet Hour for them, but the Lord helps me by his Grace, to vex them, and nip them sometimes. And though by their renewed and fierce Assaults my Heart is many Times ready to faint and sink within me, yet Gods gracious Covenant Promises keeps Hope alive in my Soul, that I shall at length have Strength to be avenged of them: That Gods free and powerful Grace will at last enable me to get the Day, and with it give me the Conquerors Crown.

XVI.

I am very prone, not only as to Temporals, but as to spirituals also to rob God of his Honour, and to deprive my self of the Comfort of what I have, because I have not all I want, wish for, and desire. As to my Graces and Duties, I find so much weakness in the one, and so many Defects and Imperfections in the other. It's true I should forget those things that are behind,
and

and be reaching forth, and pressing forward, and cherish all craving Desires here, O let Perfection only give them Bounds: So when I have done my best, I am to acknowledge my self an unprofitable Servant, and deny all in point of Righteousness or Merit, and bewail my Fallings short. Yet I think it is my Weakness, nay indeed my great Sin, that I am no more humbly thankful to God, for what he hath done for me, and do no more rejoice in it. Methinks I smell something of a proud Heart at the bottom of this, though it lieth very close.

XVII.

I have sometimes thought, its well for me that Cordials are not in my reach; if they were, they are so sweet that I should be for feeding, for living on them, when (alas!) the sickly Constitution of my Soul requires things of a quite contrary Nature many times, and my frail Flesh would not be long able to bear them, even such as I have sometimes been admitted to taste of. And so when my heavenly, wise and tender Physician sees I need a bitter Potion, (Physick that may be displeasing in going down, and a little painful in its working) gives me that, and reserves his Cordials for a fainting Fit, when I shall need them most, and they do me most good. I am not to quarrel with him, or think worse of him, because he prefers my spiritual Health before the pleasing of my Pallate, but rather admire and love him for his skilful Care, and be thankful to him for bitter as well as sweet. A sweet Heaven, when once I get possessed of that, will make the Thoughts of every thing sweet that help'd me thither.

XVIII.

XVIII.

As to that great Work of close serious Self-Examination, I find the Devil and my own bad Heart (which is ever too ready to side with him) great Enemies to it; they will let me read, and hear, and pray, and talk of Religion quietly, if I will but keep far enough off from this and the like inward spiritual Exercise. It's too difficult, too spiritual; in plain English, it's a likely way to spoil all, the way to make me holy and happy. Yet I am perswaded, sometimes he hath put me upon this Duty unseasonably, when I have been overclouded with Melancholy, and under many perplexing Doubts and Fears, able to discern nothing but what has made against me; by which I have suffered much Damage, undoing that in a short time, which hath cost me much Time and Pains in doing. So that I find it needful to use great Caution in fixing the Time for this Duty; and that at such times as these, it's my best way instead of falling upon Marks for the Trial of my Graces, to fall to my Work upon my Knees, and to labour at it, till I can feel those Graces I would fain discern, I have many times found Relief this way, when by the other Course I have but perplexed and tormented my self, and made that precious profitable Duty look more frightfully upon me.

XIX.

I find further, that when I have done my best here, the Comfort of my Evidences depends exceeding much on a holy Care and Watchfulness; while my Heart is kept tender, while I keep up Communion with God, and keep at a distance from Sin, my Comfort continues, but when once I begin to cool, and grow vain and
careless,

careless, and let down my Watch, and make Outs from God, and grow bold with Sin, it's gone presently. When once my Graces and good Affections begin to languish, my spiritual Hopes, Comforts and Joys languish with them. And alas ! how often it is thus with me !

XX.

The Devil hath been plying me all manner of ways ; he would fain have this poor Soul of mine in his Clutches, but I hope it is in safe hands, out of his reach. Sometimes he hath much perplexed and tormented me this way. When I have stood by any dear Friend over a Well, or by a Mire, I have been filled with amazing Fears, lest I should have thrown him in. Or if I have had a Knife or a Sword, or the like, in my hands, lest I should have killed him, tho I have loved him as my own Soul ; sometimes I have foolishly given him ground by a Retreat, and then he hath got great advantage against another opportunity. But at length, the Lord taught me to slight and neglect him, and as it were, laugh at him, and so of late I have not heard from him this way.

XXI.

I find that secret Prayer hath a very great Influence upon all other Duties. Though sometimes the Lord acts in a way of Prerogative, as when he is found of them that seek him not, yet ordinarily I find it best with me in my Family, and so also in publick Worship, when my Heart hath been most enlarged and drawn out to God in secret Prayer before. And so ordinarily those Duties, Sermons, Sacraments, issue best, which send me to my God in secret again.

XXII.

I have often thought how good God is to me, in that he doth not give me in his Mercies all at once, but as it were crumbles them to me, some at one time, some at another, as hereby I am kept closer to him in a way of Dependance and Prayer, by which means sweet Communion with him is maintained. Blessed be God for this.

XXIII.

I have observed this ill Faculty of my bad Heart, I am very apt generally when I feel Mercies coming, then to abate of the Fervency of my Spirit in Prayer, whereas I should then pull the harder. I do believe this is a sign of greater Wickedness in my Heart than I am aware of: and I do really believe I have suffered deeply by this Miscarriage. By this means I have got but small parcels of Mercies, when continued Fervency might have brought them in by wholesale, and many a fair Blessing which I have thought my self sure of, it hath been so near, that I have this way missed of.

XXIV.

I find there is much more real, inward, sweet and lasting Comfort and Satisfaction in a self-denying, than in a self-gratifying, Flesh-pleasing Course. And yet alas! I am so enslaved to Sense and Flesh, that it is even nothing with me to act cross to my own Experience herein.

XXV.

This hath been a Sacrament-Sabbath, I have frequently observed of late, that when a Sabbath, when a Duty, when a Sacrament is over, and I come to look upon my manifold Miscarriages, Defects, and Comings short, both as to
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what I ought to have done, and as to what I might have enjoyed (for I am a very bungler in Religion, God knows, as ever was) I am then apt passionately to desire, O that this Sabbath was to begin again, I would surely spend it better. O that this Duty was to do over again! I would endeavour to do it better, would mend this and that in it. I have been ready to hope there hath been something of Sincerity in this, a desire to serve God better, and to enjoy more of him. But then when the next Sabbath comes, when the next opportunity comes, I am much what at the old pass; bungle still, it may be worse than before, which gives me but too just cause to fear Unsoundness and Hypocrisy in such Desires. The Lord knows what I am. Such things as these makes me ready to fear, I do not yet know my self. But yet if there be Sincerity in the main (as I would still fain hope there is) I do a little in this forget my self; for pretty much of my poor Doings and Enjoyments here in this imperfect State, lieth in sincere Desires, and I must not expect that here on Earth, which is reserved for the Felicity of Heaven. O there I shall both serve and enjoy God to my mind, nay to his: Blessed are they that are there.

XXVI.

One thing occurred to me this Week, which I would set a Remark upon. I had a Project in my Heart, in the Thoughts of which I did for several days much please and delight my self, in hopes I might have an opportunity of doing something for, and enjoying much of God: O thought I, I shall sure have many a good Hour. But alas! when I came to bring the matter to a Head, I found my Design frustrate, another having

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ving stept in before. Upon this my Heart began to sink, having met with several such Disappointments of late. Sure thought I, this looks dark. This seems to speak thus, Thou art a Vessel in which the Lord delighteth not. Yet I found this, that my Soul was inwardly pleased, to think that though the Lord had rejected me, yet the Work was like to be done, and that by a better hand : And in that I could and did rejoice. The Lord knows it is many times a Heart-cutting Thought to me, to think that I who have done so much against God, should do so little for him, and that the Lord should seem to reject and lay me aside. But I have no cause to murmur or complain, as though the Lord did neglect me herein. I am not such a goodly tool as to expect the honour of doing much for God ; though was I capable, he deserves as much from me as all the Angels and Saints in Heaven and Earth can ever do him : And therefore I would endeavour humbly to stoop to this too, and say with *David*, (and O that I could do it with his Spirit) If he thus say, *I have no delight in thee, behold here am I, let him do to me (either use me or lay me aside) as seemeth good unto him.*

XXVII.

March 19. 1693.

N.B. One Saturday Morning something about a year ago, Business putting in pretty early, I was cast besides my usual time of Prayer ; and afterwards a new Chapman coming in, the time I spent in selling him some Goods, and in attending him afterwards, occasioned my whole neglect of the Duty that Morning, and the Day proving busy and throng, I had such hideously wicked Thoughts cast into my mind, (Come, thou mayst have as good a Market, though thou didst not pray this Morning,

Morning, as though thou hadst) such like Thoughts again and again returning upon me: Indeed I do remember I did abhor these Thoughts, as arising either from an impious Atheistical Heart, or else being some of Hells blackest Injections. And I was several times amazed and affrighted at the looks of them, and I did that day and several times since fully expect that the Lord would by some Judgment or other testify against them. And the last Week I hear my Chapman is broke and run away, and that parcel of Goods like to be wholly lost. Well, I would take notice of God's Hand, and humble my self under it, and I bless God it did send me to my Knees, and I am glad at my Heart the Lord hath thus met with me; Lord, I will be on thy side. I have not a word to say, I will not say one word for this base Heart of mine. If this Folly will not out by gentler Methods, whip it out, and spare not for its crying. It hath many times made me neglect thee and thy Service. By its good Will forsooth, I must only serve thee, and mind the Concerns of my poor Soul and Eternity, when the World will give me leave, when I have no other Business, no Chapman to attend. Thou wretchedly impudent Heart, canst thou do thus any more, and look me, nay God, in the face again. Lord, shall not this Fol'y now depart from me? Well, if ever I should yield to thee any more, to make Religion crouch to the World, I leave this upon Record to be a standing Witness against my shameful, unaccountable Sin and Folly. That Gain is cursed which is the Price of Prayer.

XXVIII.

Upon frequent Observation of the Lord's deal- *MS.*
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ings with me, I find that before some extraordinary Exercise, either by a violent shock of Temptation, or some sore and sharp Affliction, he is wont to give out to my Soul more than ordinary Manifestations of himself (as it were laying me in Ballast before a Storm) either by realizing some precious Promise to me, most frequently such as relate to the blessed State and World above, giving me to taste unspeakable Sweetness therein; or else giving in the immediate witness of his blessed Spirit, and with it those endearing and irresistible Discoveries of his Love, which I have then no Power to doubt of, or stand against; and such as for the time are sweetly, O sweetly over-pouring, extending my narrow Soul, and filling, extending and filling ~~it~~. And when the Lord hath been pleased thus to come in, sometimes in Converse with others, &c. or in his publick Worship, especially in that heavenly Exercise of Singing, I have been hard put to it sometimes to keep it in, so far as that others, if they should have observed me, should not have seen that in my Countenance and outward Carriage, which to them might seem Lightness and Vanity, not knowing whence it came, or what I felt within, which hath made me oft wish for a Vail, that no Eye might see me, or that my Lord and I had been alone; and after such Liftings up, I many times have as sore Castings down, and they are to me Prefages of them. O when shall I get above all these Clouds, and ever behold the Sun shining forth in his Strength in his glorious and glorifying Brightness.

XXIX.

O what a subtle malicious Enemy Satan is to my poor Soul. Usually before or when I am under

der the forest Exercise, the Lord is wont to make the sweetest Discoveries of himself to me, and to give me the sweetest Embraces, dealing with me after the manner of tender compassionate Mothers, who when the poor Child is sick, will have it lie on their Laps, and then it must be stroaked, and kissed more than at another time. O how tender are his Bowels of Compassion? But O the Depths of Satan! Here he comes in with his Counterfeits; sometimes I find he will turn Comforter, raising a flash I know not how, as it were, in the Surface of my Soul; his drift wherein I perceive is to rob me of the former: When I come to discover the Fallacy of his lying Comforts, he would perswade me, O they are all alike, all nothing but Deceit and mere Delusion. And thus he would by confounding me, argue me out of the very Taste and Feeling of my Soul. But shall I believe him who is a Liar from the beginning? I would say I will not, but he hath gulled me so often, that I am afraid. But Lord, if thou wilt but say the word, I dare say it after thee, who dost but say, *Let things be*, and they are.

XXX.

I find it is extreamly difficult to keep in the narrow way, my basegadding Heart very prone to Extreams, and Satan ready to further and promote it what he can. I have frequently observed these seven Years and better, that I have been in the World, my Heart hath been very prone to run out inordinately after it, even to the wretched shameful neglect of God, my Soul, and that glorious World above. And instead of a Fig-leaf, a pretence of Diligence in my Calling, must cover this part of my Nakedness. Indeed this hath been most common and ordinary with

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me, but at other times, both formerly, and especially of late, I have been very prone to look upon all worldly Business and Employment as a Burden and Toil, wishing all my Days Sabbaths, &c. being glad of any Pretence to evade a Journey, glad of any tolerable fair occasion (yea though it hath been some bodily Indisposition) to leave my Shop and go to my Book, &c. And glad when Night hath come on this account: Indeed I have cause to bless the Lord, that the Strife lieth not between my Shop and a worse place, as alas! it doth with too many. And further, I am sensible I have cause to be highly thankful that the Lord hath so soon given me to see so much of the Emptiness and Vanity of the Creature; though had I been a better Scholar I might have learnt my Lesson much sooner and much better than I have done. Alas! the Fault hath been in my bad Heart, and not in my Master, or my Books, in the Means and Methods of his Teaching. And most of all I have cause to be thankful, that the Lord hath been pleased of his own mere Pleasure to give me in any measure that sweet and powerful Taste and Relish of Things spiritual and heavenly, without which my Stomach no doubt to this day had only stood towards this empty, husky and filthy stuff, as well as others who know no better. Lord encrease this more and more! But yet I believe there is a Medium between these two Extrems, which is my Duty. I have a Body as well as a Soul, and both of them must be diligently and prudently in their Places provided for. And I was made, and am preserved and maintained for others Good as well as for my own. And this way God is to be served and honoured in the World. And therefore I judge and de-

determine that a chearful Diligence in my Place and Calling is as well my Duty, and that which God hath joined together, I may not put asunder, but at my Peril. Lord help me to hit the right nick at last.

XXXI.

Feb. 4, 9¹.

Being much indisposed under great Fears and Discouragements, I set my self to seek the Lord, that he would make this a comfortable Sabbath to me; and I resolved to take particular notice of this Adventure by Prayer, to see what return was made, to see whether I had any Interest in Heaven; whether I could get a Boon from God in my need, begging it for Jesus sake. And now looking back, I find that the Lord hath made this Sabbath an exceedingly sweet and precious one, giving in the particular Mercy I begged of him, and doing above what I then could ask or think. And I do verily believe, that I have this day an evident Instance of God's hearing my poor Prayers, for his and my dear Jesus sake. And I take the more notice of it, because I begged it as a further Token for Good. Come O my poor, weak, and languishing Faith, here's a Bit for thee, here's a Cordial Drop for thee. Is it not sweeter than Honey from the Comb? O it is. Why take it and make thy best of it, both for the present and also for the time to come. Love the Lord O my Soul! Lord, thou shalt be my God, and Lord thou shalt have me at thy door, at thy feet, while I have a Breath to draw: This I do gladly from my Soul subscribe, Lord thou hast my Heart and Hand.

Jo. Barrett.

XXXII.

Feb. 6.

This Afternoon I spent with some Friends in Prayer at Mrs. H's, upon her Sons account, and

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the Lord was pleased to give me in another sensible Answer of Prayer, in the help he vouchsafed me, notwithstanding my great Indisposition and Discouragement. He directed me to a suitable Truth, tho I had another first in my Intention; and I was unusually assisted and enlarged in the repetition of it. And I would hope it might be blessed to some. Lord I would note this down to thy Praise, and for my further Encouragement.

XXXIII.

March 15, 93.

This Day I had an Answer of Prayer from the Lord, in his giving me a gracious cast of his Countenance, and an Heart full of Joy thereupon, I feared a great while that this Adventure had been lost, but just at last it came with a full Tide. O how great is his Goodness!

XXXIV.

March 21

I find this, that the more careful I am, with Humility and Thankfulness to observe God's gracious dealing with me in the sweet Incomes of his blessed Spirit in a way of Quickning and Comfort, in giving in Answers to my poor Prayers, &c. the more Matter he gives me for my Observation. O what shall I render?

XXXV.

April 10, 94.

Things looking very black and threatening, and my Spirit being very uneasy, at my request Cousin W. and other Christian Friends assisted in keeping a Day of Prayer upon a publick account. I repeated and concluded, and in Prayer the Lord enabled me to wrestle with him, and that I might take the faster hold on him, he helped me to cast all my own Concerns down at his foot, for him to make me, or to break me, as he saw good, so he would but be gracious to his People. And towards the close he was graciously pleased

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as it were to smile on me, I cannot tell how to express it, but forthwith I found my Heart sweetly eased, and I came away with a full Perswasion, as though the Thing had been before mine Eyes, that he would not quite leave us, methought I had gained that blessed Point. *Amen*, Lord! This is a Day to be remembered.

XXXVI. *Aug. 13. 1694.*

I observed that when the Lord being provoked by my Sins, or when for my Exercise he is pleased to with-draw from me, I observe that his return to me, though sometimes it is all on a sudden, so as doth strangely surprize me (just as if the Sun should suddenly break forth this dark Night) so that I do scarce know where I am. But at other Times it is gradually, and by steps. Sometimes he will just shew himself, O now think I, I have got my God again! But alas! immediately he is gone again. This cuts deep, renews my Sorrow, makes my wound bleed afresh, and more than it did before. Methinks this sudden short-lived glimpse of Light leaves me in greater darkness than I was in before. But yet I believe, there may be much Mercy in this Dispensation. Hereby he would more deeply humble me, make Sin more bitter to me. O how it Cuts! hereby he would quicken, encourage, and egg me on in my lamenting after him, and seeking him forrowing; the way to find him at last. Hereby he would keep Hope alive, and also teach me to value the Mercy more: Thus making it more extreamly sweet, when at last I get my dear God again to my Hearts desire.

XXXVII. *Nov. 18. 1694.*

I find by Experience, in some measure, that a truly charitable frame of Spirit, as it stands opposed

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posed to the devilish Sin of Envy (properly so called indeed, both as it makes one like him in Disposition, and also laieth one under that which is no small Part of this present Misery, and further exposeth one to his more dreadful Portion hereafter) I say, that this charitable frame of Spirit, a hearty wishing of, and delighting in the welfare and Prosperity of others, is a very sweet, comfortable enriching Thing. This doth strangely multiply my Mercies, for by this Means, I not only come to enjoy my own Mercies (which the wretched Sin of Envy would hinder me from doing) but also the Mercies and Comforts of others too. Yea, and let a Man be never so selfish, I can this way share with him whether he will or no. Yea and further, methinks had I but more of this Spirit in some respects, I might more truly enjoy others Mercies, than if they were my own, eating the Fat, and sucking the sweet of them, without the trouble, labour, danger and Temptations which attend the getting and the holding of them. Thus I may smell the fragrant Rose in my Neighbours Hand, without the trouble of scrambling for it, or the danger of pricking my Fingers in the plucking and holding of it. Lord! for more of this Spirit, and then though I had fewer Mercies of my own, yet I never need fear wanting Matter of Comfort to my self, or of thanksgiving unto Thee, while others, especially while any Child of thine hath them.

XXXVIII. *Nov. 23. 1694.*

I find by Experience on both Hands, that it is a matter of no small Concernment to me, how my Thoughts are employed in my sleep. On the one Hand I am fully satisfied, that Satan hath a way of working upon our corrupt Fancies when
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the Lord sees good to permit him, even when in Sleep our outward Senses are all bound up. And that he hath again and again thus wrought upon mine, and thereby stirred up my Corruptions, this though a sad Truth, yet is too plain a one for me either to question or deny. And moreover to do the Devil right, my own bad Heart can go that way fast enough of it self without his Whip or Spur. And that these sinful Thoughts in my Sleep, whether they be vain, proud, envious, passionate, covetous, filthy, &c. that they do make me guilty before God, and also stain and defile my Soul, is a thing also plain and undeniable. These sleeping Sins also make way for waking ones, Oh what an ill frame I sometimes find my Heart in, after one of these Dreams? On the other Hand, I am as fully satisfied, that the Holy Spirit of God is sometimes pleased to Work upon our Souls, to excite and actuate our Graces in our sleep. It is a thing plain to me beyond Dispute, that sometimes I have enjoyed real Communion with God, in a sweet and sensible Manner in a pious Dream, as when I have been hearing a Sermon, or engaged in the Duty of Prayer. The Effects of these Dreams is an undeniable Argument to me, my Heart being left by them at my awaking, in a much more sweet savoury and elevated frame, then when I lay down, yea than ordinarily it is under those very Ordinances themselves. Thus it is with me sometimes, but my most frequent Experiences alas! are of the sadder sort. But this I say, the effect of these Dreams doth convince me, that it is a matter of Concernment to me what they are. And further I observe this, that to prevent sinful Dreams in the Night, and to obtain good ones,

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ones, it concerns me to take great heed, how my Tongue and Thoughts are employed the preceeding Day, especially towards, and in the closing Part of it: For that which then makes the latest and deepest Impression upon my mind, ordinarily that is wont to be the Theam my busie Fancy works upon when I am asleep.

XXXIX.

Dec. 7. 1695.

What Time I could fairly gain, this Day being *Saturday*, as also on the former Days of the Week, from other necessary Employments, hath been spent in exciting serious praying Christians of my Acquaintance in this Place, to spend one Hour every *Tuesday* Morning, in extraordinary Prayer to God for his Church; and particularly, to wrestle with him for this present Parliament. And in Writing to many Ministers, as in this County, so likewise in *Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Yorkshire, &c.* upon the same Account. Thus I was taken up till between Six and Seven a Clock at Night, when being distressed in my Thoughts the next Day being Sacrament-Day, I fell upon my Knees, and laid the Matter before the Lord, begged his Acceptance of me in what I had done, and withal begged that if he did accept me, he would be pleased to vouchsafe me a Sign, and that it might be this, his composing of my Thoughts unto, and graciously assisting of me in the great Work of Preparation, which I had then mostly to do, even in that Inch of Time. In this thing the great God was pleased to hearken to such a sorry sinful Worm as I, mightily helping me in Prayer and Meditation, and particularly enabling me to discern my Evidences, with unusual clearness, and to date some further very satisfactory ones, which have lain by me for some Months unfinished: Sealing Matters to me very comfortably, and keeping Satan back from molesting me. Which things I could not but remark again and again, with many Tears of passionate Love and Thankfulness. And though he was pleased, for wise and holy Reasons, very much to withdraw from me, as to any sensible Enlargement and Comfort, during the Administration of this precious Ordinance, yet I have cause to bless him for his goodness to me in other Parts, and Duties of that Day; and must set a Special Remark upon his goodness to me in this thing, and wait to see what he will further be pleased to do in Relation to this Praying Project. Blessed be God, Success, Success!

Resolves.

CHAP. IV.

Containing some of his Resolves, in order to the carrying on a more Lively Course of True Evangelical Holiness.

NOV. 6. 1694.

I AM sensible that 'tis more then time, that I fix a Purpose and Resolution more deeply and firmly in my heart, to be making all possible and speedy advances towards Heaven, and that I prosecute this my Resolution at another rate then alas hitherto I have done: It is too too plain and obvious, both in its self and in its effects, that I have been Loitering, and, as it were, but playing with Religion hitherto.

My Precious Time, Oppertunities and Advantages are passing from me apace, and I may be a nearer borderer on Eternity, that awful thing, then I am aware of.

I cannot but be sensible of abundance of things amiss and wanting both in my heart and life; And, (as former sad Experience hath taught me) I am also sensible, that viewing these things only in the gross, and accordingly resolving about them, is not the way: I may thus be disheartned and discouraged, but am never like to make any tolerable good work of it, until I, as it were, take my Work in pieces, and so fall about it in its particular parts and divisions; and thus, the Lord assist-

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ing me, I may be enabled to make something of it in the end. And so, in order hereunto, I do purpose to be more in examining my self, and in observing my heart and ways, that so I may more particularly discover things amiss and wanting; and as I discover them, and find there is need, I do also purpose (having already found some help and benefit thereby) even to bind my self accordingly, by a particular Solemn Promise, for a certain time only at the first, that so I may take this my bad Heart at all the advantages that I can.

Lord, let me not lose my Soul, and lose Heaven for want of taking a little more pains, That be far from me, Lord.

March 4. 93, +

I Do Resolve, and solemnly Promise (the Lord assisting me) that I will every day, during this present Month of *March*, Read Two Chapters of my Bible (at least) in my Closet, and that I will there seek the Lord by Prayer three times (at least) every day, unless by Bodily Indisposition, or some other thing which I do not now foresee, I should be unavoidably hindred.

Jo. Barrett.

April 1. 1694.

Blessed be God :
Resolved that I will hold on this Course.

Jo. Barrett.

Octob. 14.

Octob. 14. 1694.

THIS day I have Solemnly Renewed my Covenant with God, and being in some measure sensible of my former Carelessness, Sloth and Negligence (O shameful and dreadful thing !) I am now purposed in my heart to take the greatest care, and to put forth the greatest diligence in the use of all God's appointed means (he graciously assisting me by his Spirit) in order to advancing in Serious Religion, and Practical Godliness.

And being particularly sensible of a great defect in the Management of my Diary, I do resolve, the Lord helping me, forthwith to amend that ; I will endeavour, every Night, before I sleep, more strictly to take account of my frame and carriage in the Day past ; And then every Lord's-day I will take a general review of the whole Week, and this in order to my growing every day and Week better then other ; O that I might at last come to that ! And, in order to this, I will endeavour to be more watchful continually ; And I do solemnly Promise to begin this course the next day following the date hereof ; Help Lord !

To. Barrett.

Nov. 6. 1694.

MEeting with an Occasion to turn my Thoughts to the frequent Practice of my dear and Blessed Lord, in raising Excellent, sweet and profitable discourses from outward earthly Objects that were before him, it minds me of the woeful barrenness of my Heart, of my sinful, foolish and shameful neglect here, whereby I loose much precious Time, loose the benefit of many good Thoughts, and also suffer damage by as many bad ones, which are ever ready to take Possession of my mind, when unimployed, as of an House empty and uninhabited, and whereby my discourse with others is rendered very barren and unprofitable, if not sinful and hurtful; therefore having earnestly sought the Lords help I do bind my self by solemn Promise to endeavour to be daily raising some good profitable Spiritual Thoughts and Meditations from some or other of those outward Objects that are before me this present week. And because my Memory is weak and slippery, and because that may be darted into my mind at one time which I cannot think on at another, therefore I do further resolve (as I can get time) to write down such things as are most material for my own after benefit, and likewise for the benefit of such of mine as I shall leave behind me.

John Barrett.

Nov. 11.

Job. 11. Blessed be God.

ANd further, I have by the few Experiments which I have this week made, got such a taste of the pleasure and advantage coming in by this pretty employment, that I am resolved, the Lord assisting me, still to hold on, and to endeavour to make it my daily practice to my lives end.

John Barret.

Job. 18. 94.

THo' I hope I may say that I never was a hearty friend unto, or a promoter of drinking healths, yet alas, since of late my business hath called me more frequently where I have observed understanding sober Persons (whom I have had reason to think much wiser and better then my self) make no scruple at it, by degrees I began to think more favourably of that sinful practice, and was ready to conclude that, seperating it from Intemperance, there was not so much harm in it as some imagined, and hereupon have again and again complied with it, my great Sin in so doing the good Lord pardon and forgive me! And now being convinced by a hint in a Sermon of Mr. Owen's this day that this is an unwarrantable unscriptural way of expressing my respect to any, and observing withal that the most Pious and Godly Persons are the greatest Enemies to it, my former abhorrence of this practice being in some measure

sure revived, I am fully purposed and resolved in my heart, and do here solemnly promise that I will never do it more, whatsoever Company I may hereafter be cast into, let come on it what will, yea and that I will endeavour to disparage it to as many as I can ; Help Lord !

John Barret.

Occa-

Occasional Meditations.

Part I.

CHAP. V.

His Meditations in Two Parts.

Meditation I.

Upon my little Childes running to me, when it knew it had offended me.

I have oft chide my Child for its peevish frowardness, and it seeing me come into the house with displeasure in my looks, upon the like occasion, it immediatly came running nimble to me, scarce giving me time to speak, and then began to still of it self; upon this pretty, and somewhat strange, action of the Child, I was at first even amazed, and my heart was so affected and moved with love and pitty towards it that I could not chide it then, but on the contrary took it into my arms to kiss it.

Now may I not learn a notable peice of Spiritual wisdom from my babe here, *scilicet*, how to behave my self towards my Heavenly Father, when by my sins I have offended him, not to run away from him, but on the contrary to run to him, even into his merciful

arms, for he hath the heart and bowels of a Father, yea of a Heavenly Father, and that's more.

If this my Child had run from me, to take shelter with it's Maid, this would but have encreased my displeasure, and its like I should have fetched it thence with a frown, if not with the Rod.

So alas, when I am so, (worse then Childishly) foolish, as in a fullen, stubborn, shy or distrustful humour to run away from my God, when I have offended him, and am afraid of his chiding me, or making use of his Rod, if, I say, I then run to any other refuge but himself, his free mercy in and through a dear Jesus, I shall this way but highten his displeasure, and may reckon upon it to be fetched back by the weeping cross.

But if upon the sweet carriage of this my Child, when it knew it had offended me, and saw anger in my looks, if (I say) upon this its sweet carriage my anger was so speedily appeased, and my heart so tenderly affected towards it; what may not I then expect from the God and Father of Mercy, upon my speedy return and ingenious submission unto him after I have offended him, seeing he is become my gracious reconciled God and Father in and through a dear Jesus, and withall considering, that his bowels of Mercy, pitty and compassion towards me (tho' indeed I am the least in all my Fathers house) are infinitely more tender then mine are, or can be, towards this little babe of mine.

Meditation 2.

Upon my little Childrens Pratteling to me, and my great delight and well-pleasedness with the same.

I cannot but again and again observe how mightily I am pleased with my Childrens pratteling to me; If I enquire into the ground and reason of my delight here, certainly it cannot proceed from the Fineness, Wittiness and Eloquence of their language, for the Elder of them is not so old as to speak plain, and the other cannot speak a word; and yet I find because they are my Children I am better pleased with their prattle and pretty little notes, then I should be with the discourse of a stranger, and much more of an Enemy, should he address me in a most witty and Eloquent strain: Should not this put thee in mind, O my Soul, how the Lord is well pleased with the poor broken Prayers and Praises of his Children, [O my Dove! (saith he) that art in the clefts of the Rock, in the secret places of the staires; let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice, for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comly, 2 Cant. 14.] when the services of others, tho' outwardly adorned at another rate then theirs, are rejected by him, and an abomination unto him.

This is my Child, a part of my self, so that I cannot but love it dearly; and I think with my self, this little babe of mine it doth what it can, if it could speak to me it would, and
if

if it and I live I do not question but it will. So the Lord he loves his Children most dearly and delightfully too, so as he doth not love other men; yea, and he considers and takes notice, not only what his Children are, but what they would be: not only what they do, but what they would do; yea, and what by his grace they shall both be, and do, hereafter.

Be encouraged, O my Soul, to hope for his gracious acceptance of thy sincere, tho' alas, very poor and sorry services! True Lord, I know that by Nature I am a stranger to thee, yea an Enemy, which is worse; but now through free grace I am related unto dear Jesus, and so art thou, and hereupon I am humbly bold to say, with reverence and gladness of heart, the great God and I are near akin, thou my Father, I thy Child; O! what manner of love is this? Now Lord, let not my poor sorry unworthy nonsense be rejected by thee: Thou knowest that I would fain serve thee better then at present I do or can; and when I am once grown up to maturity, when of a babe I am become a man in Christ, then Lord, O then thou knowest that I shall.

Meditation 3.

Upon my two Childrens lying with me and my Wife one night in a strait bed.

I perceive I am like to have but an uneasy nights lodging of it; this is but a very strait narrow bed, and here is my Wife and
two

two Children in it, so that there is but a very little room left for me; But that which is like to make this nights lodging much more uneasy and troublesome unto me then another person would ordinarily find in the like circumstances is, that heaviness, weariness and restlessness of body I am usually troubled with, the effect and symptom of that distemper of the *Scurvy* which I am so much under the power of, which for most part makes me sleep ill, and enclines me much to tumbling and tossing about for a little ease as I ly awake: And truly my former experience hath taught me to conclude, that had I never so large and soft a Bed, yet I could not rationally promise my self a good refreshing nights rest, such as other strong and healthful, especially if laborious, persons usually have, unless the power of this distemper was first corrected in me.

Now may not this matter suggest some good useful profitable thoughts unto my mind to divert and please it for the present, and to enrich it for afterwards. My condition here in this World is attended with some uneasy and troublesome circumstances; no wonder of that indeed, but rather that they are no more and greater then they are: But then, that it is not so much the straitness of my Bed, as the ill habit and indisposition of my Body, which threatens me with an uneasy and restless night: So neither is it any outward troublesome circumstances of my life, which are so much to be blamed, as the authors of that unhinging disquietude and uneasiness of my mind, which it is too often justly chargable with, as are the inward

inward, rooted, Scurvy distempers of my heart and mind it self; such as Pride, Distrust, Impatience, Discontent and the like, if the Lord would but help me against these, it would certainly be better with me tho' my outward condition here in the world should grow worse then it is: But alas, if these should still prevail, I should then in vain promise my self ease and rest upon the most large and downy soft Bed that by all the Creatures can possibly be composed and made up for me.

But then again, as I do quietly and cheerfully submit unto the inconveniencies of this nights lodging, because it is but for a night: So methinks the consideration of the brevity and shortness of my life, it should be a powerful argument with me to perswade me more patiently to bear all the troubles and inconveniency of it: These things will very shortly be at an end; And why should that trouble me much, which shall not trouble me long? I hope the Lord hath better things in store for me in that blessed life which is to come, *Heb. 4. 9. There remaineth therefore a rest unto the people of God.*

Meditation 4.

*Upon my Childs crying out very suddenly and
and violently one night.*

A Las! What is the matter now? I fear some Pin pricks the Child, which may be digging deeper and deeper, as the Child cries out more feircely, which troubles me to think of: But before I could well get up and light
my

my Candle, I began to think with my self, the Mother hath got a bad cold which no doubt doth ill affect her milk, and so it is more than probable the poor babe hath drawn that ill quality together with the milk from her breast, which hath caused that inward griping pain in its body, which extorteth those lamentable affecting cries and skreets from it.

Now methinks this doth very plainly and naturally suggest unto me the consideration of its Original Corruption, of those lamentable Soul-maladies and distempers, which we its poor Parents have been instruments of conveying to it with its very being, which are indeed the procuring cause of all outward bodily ones, and far worse then they can be.

And now methinks if I can be so grieved and troubled for it under these pains, which Nature hath taught it to complain of significantly enough tho' it cannot speak, should I not be much more sensible of, grieved for, and concerned for its cure of those inward Spiritual ones which are inexpressibly worse, and which alas it is not at all sensible of its self, nor at present capable of being so? Lord turn my heart towards my Children! yea, and give me also leave and help to turn it unto thee for them. O pardon, sanctifie and heal them! Let each of my poor babes live in thy sight! Lord make them thine indeed, and I shall look upon them as more mine for their being so.

Meditation 5.

*Upon my Wifes taking something for her Cold,
and to Correct the Windiness of her Milk.*

I Perceive my Wife was of my Opinion, touching the occasion of the Childs Crying last Night, that it was originally from her Cold, for I see she is now preparing something for her self, to help her against her Cold, and to Correct the Windiness of her Milk; This Method of hers is pleasing to me, and gives me a fair occasion for a profitable Instructive Reflection; Had she neglected her self, and only given some remedy to the Child, that course indeed might have been more troublesome and difficult, but in all probability less effectual, while it would be still drawing that from her Breast, which would feed its Distemper, and renew its Pain; But now she is striking at the Distemper in the Root and Causes of it, and taking a course to Cure both Mother and Child at once.

I am daily defiled and burdened with a multitude of vain sinful distempered Thoughts, the immediate off-spring of my sinful depraved Mind and Heart; so alas, What a multitude of disorders in my Life? Now this method of my Wifes, it may be instructive to me here, to teach me the most proper direct way and course to get all remedied, which is to fall to work directly and principally with my heart, diligently to use all God's appointed Means, especially by Faith to get the Blood of Christ applied to it in order to its Cure.

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This is to imitate our Wise Physicians, who, tho' they will not quite neglect the lesser outward Symptoms, yet mainly bend themselves to strike at their Patients Distemper in the main Root and Causes of it; yea, this is to follow that Advice which hath the stamp of Divine Wisdom and Authority upon it (as we have it somewhere, if I mistake not, in such Terms as these) a purging the Fountain, that so the Streams may be pure also; a making the Tree good, that so the Fruit may be good also: And truly without taking this course, I have reason to fear that all my Pretensions and Endeavours, to lay a Law upon my extravagant, Disorderly, Sinful, Distempered Thoughts and Actions, will, in a great measure, at least, if not altogether be vain, fruitless, and ineffectual.

Meditation 6.

Upon my Candles going out suddenly, and leaving me in the Dark.

AS I was walking in my Closet, and alas too vainly, impertinently and unprofitably imploying my thoughts, my Candle burnt down into the Socket, and at last suddenly went out, without giving me so much warning, as withall to give me time to light another, or rather because, being so taken up with my busy trifling, I did not observe the warning it did give me; should such a dark accident happen unto one possessed of, and enrich'd with a spiritual Mind, he would surely improve it to the getting of some better light, then

then that of a Candle, and it will be a further instance of the wretched barrenness (if not something worse of mine) if I do not at least endeavour it; And methinks the sudden going out of my Candle may fitly enough represent unto me the quick work which Death, that grand extinguisher, makes with many, whom, alas, it finds secure enough, as to any serious thought of it, or of its awful Consequents, which, alas, as to them, are like to prove most dismally dark, even darkness it self, such, the light whereof is darkness, but taken up in a busy trifling about other things; Take the serious Admonition, which this doth naturally afford thee, O my Soul! Think how deplorably sad thy Case would be, if Death should so meet and deal with thee; Trifle no longer for fear of the worst. And further, if I take the late ~~part~~ of my Candle, as representing to me the Light of the Gospel, as (if I mistake not) it is somewhere held forth to us under that Metaphor. May I not then have hence occasion given me for this reflection, that to play and trifle with, and under this Light doth sometimes provoke the Lord to hide, if not altogether to extinguish it, to withdraw it from the place where it is so ill improved, or rather abused.

O be more careful to walk in the Light, to improve it while it is yet with thee. And further, if I take the forementioned light as resembling to me my outward Creature, Comforts and Enjoyments, as they are sometimes held forth under the notion of light, but of a lower kind, if compared with Spiritual ones, as the light of a Candle is a poor sorry inferior

ferior thing, if compared with that of the Sun, yea, and as I now find, by the want of it, that this Candle, while it lasted, was it self a considerable outward convenience and comfort to me this dark Night; yet, I say, considering that by the extinguishing of its light, my Mind is withdrawn, taken off from that vain impertinent employment it was in, and turn'd to serious Meditation and Prayer; I see no Reason to Murmur at, or sorrowfully take on for this loss, but rather to look on it as a gainful accident.

Just thus, methinks, the Lord doth often deal with his dearest Children, as to their outward Comforts here, extinguisheth their Creature Candle-lights, but not out of an unkind intention to leave them in the dark, but on the contrary, to take them off from sin, which, as it is the work of Darkness, so leads, or tends directly to it, to divert and take off their Minds and Hearts from the little, I had almost said, Painted Lights of the Creature, to fix them on his Blessed Self; which, sure, we have no reason in the World to take unkindly, but, on the contrary, most thankfully from him: It can be no loss to a Man sure, to exchange the poor dim Light of his Candle for that of the Sun, and yet that comparison is much too mean and low, as, alas, all others must needs be, wherein the Great *Jehovah* is concerned.

Meditation 7.

*Upon the sight of a great Company of People
attending a Mountebank on the Stage.*

WHat a Company of silly People are these? In yonder Crowd are a great many poor Country People, several of which, (itslike) have many a weary and foul step home, and now its almost Night; and further, it may be some of them will have their Pockets Pick'd, and the little Treasure they have taken away from them before they stir, a part by the Doctors deceitful Remedies, and the rest by some of his wicked Attendants; And further, its more than probable, many of them have their Markets to make, and, it may be, some of them will find, that the Commodities they want are bought up and gone before they come to enquire for them; And yet if a sober Person should go to advise them, and call them away from this their Sport, in gazing on, and listning unto these Men, who, notwithstanding all their Arch and Witty expressions and actions, as they thke them, have yet quite forfeited their Reputation for Wisdom, their Wit appearing, and being exercised only in that, which doth but proclaim their folly, yet their Eyes and Ears are so enchanted by them, that the strongest Argument would hardly persuade them to come away, until this vain Fellow shall see good to dismiss them, and that so it may be rather said, their Sport leaves them, then they it; And yet these poor People,
when

when their sport being thus over, they come away, and, it may be, find their Pockets pickt, their Commodities gone, and themselves benighted in their way home, it's like, I say, they will be ready to Curse the Mountebank for his pains, and to call themselves greater Fools than he that acted that part on the Stage.

And yet, alas, look abroad into the World, and one shall find, that the greatest part of the Men and Women in it, are guilty of greater Folly than all this amounts to; How are the most so enchanted with the gaudy Bewitching Pleasures, Honours, and Riches of the World, as to neglect God, and their precious Immortal Souls to their Eternal undoing. Here they have their Pockets pickt indeed, Satan and the World gulling them out of that little Natural Goodness and Honesty they have, and out of their Precious Time, and Golden Opportunities and Advantages to get Wisdom, which is better than Rubies. And yet let a poor Minister come, and almost Preach his Heart out, let these Charmers Charm never so wisely, these poor Creatures will not hear or regard him; O but how will the poor Wretches be ready to Curse their day, with all their Bewitching Idols? How lamentably will they rue their Folly, when they shall see all this Fine Show is over, and when a Sick Bed, as the shadow of the Evening, stretched out, begins seriously to mind them of the Night of Death, as near approaching, together with those days of Darkness afterwards, which, as to them, alas, are like to be many indeed? And when, thereupon, their Consciences begin loudly to alarm them

them with their need and want of Oile, and with the grounds they have, to fear, at least, that the Market is over: Tremble, and be astonish'd, O my Soul, at the Thoughts of this! Methinks I see the poor Wretches tearing their own flesh, and roaring out, for anguish, of their Spirits. And if the Lord should shew any of them so much Mercy, in the time of their extremity, after they have shewn so little Ingenuity to him, or Mercy to their own Souls, even when all their Charming and Beloved Vanities have left, and utterly forsaken them; if the Lord (I say) should be so Merciful to any of them, as to bring them to a true Gospel-sight and sense of their great sin and woful folly, unto himself by Faith in Christ, and so unto Heaven at last, yet these poor Creatures (whatever he may please to do in the way of Prerogative) yet they have reason to expect a very Difficult, Dark, and Doubtful Passage of it: Bless the Lord, O my Soul, who hath now, in time, in any Measure, open'd thine eyes; and further, I do solemnly charge thee, to take that serious Admonition, which is hereby suggested to thee, Beware what thou doest! See thou be not found among these wicked and most egregious sort of Fools at last!

Meditation 8.

*Upon my eating my dinner with an appetite,
and so tasting much sweetness in my food.*

WHat a difference is there between the last meal and this? Then I eat as tho' I had but newly come from some delicious Feast, but now as if with the Country man I had been following the Plow: Before as I had much ado to get a bit or two down, so what I did eat it seemed dry and insipid, as having scarce any goodness in it; but now as I eat heartily, so every bit goes down pleasantly, and tasteth very sweet and savoury: The reason of this is not from any real difference in my food, for that which I had before me the last Meal was good and savoury in it self, and that which I have before me now and am so heartily feeding on, tho' good and wholesome, yet is plain, not delicious nor attended with fine pleasing sauces to invite it down; but the reason is plainly from my stomach which is now pretty sharp and craving, as it was not before.

Methinks now in the glass this Meal presents me with, I may see the very face of my Soul: Thus have I often found it with me as to my Spiritual Food; the sweet and lovely Jesus, tho' he is always the same in himself, and also unto his blessed ones above, entirely sweet and lovely, and always so, yet if the taste and apprehensions of so vile a Sinner upon Earth as I might be allowed to judge, he should not be so: How oft alas that I am too

much of their mind who took *Manna*, Angels food for light bread? So as to my Bible, methinks it should not be the self-same Chapter and verse which I read at one time and at another, at one time sweeter then honey to my taste, at another e'en like the white of an Egg: The very same duty and Ordinance at one time tasteth nothing like it self at another: The good Books I read and Sermons I hear, how sweet and savoury at one time, and yet by and by how dry and insipid they seem to be? Now the reason of this is from my Spiritual Appetite, and not from any change in my Spiritual Food. Here I have a demonstration of the truth of what that Wise King saith, *Prov. 27. 7. The full soul loatheth an boney comb, but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet.* Get and maintain thine appetite, O my Soul, as thou wouldst savour and relish thy Food.

But yet further, as I do not neglect my food when my Stomack is bad, so that I cannot eat it with wonted pleasure, for fear of bringing my Stomack to a more vicious habit by dis-using it, so it is certainly my Wisdom as my duty also, tho' I have not at all times the like delightful gust of my Spiritual Provisions, yet constantly to observe my Spiritual Meal-times; For as by eating the bodily Appetite sometimes is by degrees recovered and encreased, one bit, as it were, inviting another down: So I have observed again and again, that when I have gone to a duty with my Appetite dull, yet I have felt it crave to some purpose before the duty hath been over and the Table drawn.

And

And on the other hand, as one may fast away his Stomack to bodily food, so no less as to Spiritual: The longer one fasteth here the longer they may, the neglect of one duty making way for the neglect of another, the consequents of which are much more to be feared and carefully avoided then those of the other, as the diseases and death of the Soul, (which this hath a natural direct tendency unto) are, I had almost said infinitely more dangerous and mischievous sad and dreadful then those of the Body.

Meditation 9.

Upon a sad melancholly Dream.

AT my first awaking this morning in a strange surprize I was ready thus to enquire, Where am I? How is it? The impressions made upon my mind by my Dream in the night being such as if the subject of it had been a matter of the greatest reality, and conveyed and confirmed to me by the highest sensible demonstration. But now I am awake, and have got my senses about me, which in my sleep were bound up while in my buisfy Fancy the sad Tragady was acting, now (I say) I am fully convinced and satisfied that it was but a Dream, and am ready to wonder in my self how I came to be so deeply affected with that which had no truth or being but only that immaginary one which it had in my unruly extravagant Fancy.

Methinks this fairly invites me to reflect upon that dreaming kind of life we poor

mortals live here upon earth; the Transitory Pleasures and Sorrows of which being compared with Spiritual and Eternal ones, are fitly enough resembled by a Pleasant or Melancholly Dream, as we shall certainly look upon them when Death and Judgment hath but once opened our eyes and thoroughly awaked us in another World. O my Soul, learn to judge of these things now as they really are, and as thou wilt certainly do hereafter.

Again, as this Melancholly Dream, tho' it put me to some present pain while I was under the immediate impressions of it, yet in that it hath left my heart in a good temper enclined to seriousness, when other kind of Dreams at other times which have tickled my corrupt fancy have had a quite contrary effect upon me; methinks in this I may plainly read that which hath been the frequent matter of my experience and observation, both as to my self and others; *scilicet*, That tho' Worldly Prosperity doth more please and gratify our carnal sensual parts, yet Crosses and Afflictions ordinarily do our Souls more good, are certainly better friends to seriousness. Improve this, O my Soul, so as further to reconcile thy self to such dispensations as thou shalt hereafter meet with them!

And further, as Death (the dying pangs of a dear friend) was the Subject-matter of this my Melancholly Dream, methinks this doth fairly reprove, and also further instruct me.

Alas, what are my ordinary most usual thoughts of Death? Are they not even like

a Dream or Vision of the night, which tho' it makes some impression for the present, yet when once I am up and got about my business its presently off again, and is as tho' it had not been, scarce leaving so much as any the least mark behind it? But consider, O my Soul, Death, and either Heaven or Hell, certainly and immediatly following after; these are no idle Dreams or night fancies; believe them stedfastly, ponder them seriously; Dream no longer about them, but prepare thy self for them with all possible care, diligence and speed. But then further, I may also learn this, that the serious thoughts and meditations of Death is an excellent means to awaken drowsy Consciences and to make men serious.

Once more, as some discourse the evening before about the Death of a Christian friend laid the foundation (as I suppose) of this my Dream, occasioned my Fancy to work upon this Theam, hence I may take notice how necessary it is in order to the preventing bad thoughts and to the procuring of good ones in my sleep in the night, to take care how my Thoughts and Tongue are employed in the preceeding day, especially towards and in the closing part of it, as my buisy Fancy I find is most frequently apt to return in the night upon that which made the latest and deepest impression upon it the day before: And that these my night thoughts are not in some sence matters to be slighted and disregarded by me, see Experience the Thirty eighth.

Meditation 10.

Upon hearing a poor old Man return God thanks after his meat.

Lord ! What sweet and pleasant musick is here ! I perceive the Palaces of Princes and great Men have not all ; I find that in this poor little smoaky cottage, which I fear is rarely to be met with there, this poor Man that cannot speak plain for Age, methinks his stamering out the praises of his God at this rate, with such warm and lively affections, and that notwithstanding his present very mean and low condition, methinks it sounds like the sweet melodious warbling of an Angel !

The poor heart his condition in the World is such that he is maintained by the charity of others, and the last time I was to see him, being affected with his condition I gave him a piece of Money my self, which he as thankfully received : But, notwithstanding his outward Poverty, I perceive he is a far richer Man then my self ; I have now this night taken him and his flock feeding, which I find hath done me more good then if I had been to see the King and Queen at their Royal Table ; But I see neither dainties, varieties or abundance before them ; nothing but a poor single *Rabbit*, and the broth it hath afforded them ; neither is this feast finely served up, I see not so much as a Napkin that the poor Man hath to dry his fingers with : And moreover I understand the poor people are now making two Meals at least in one, and yet

yet the good Soul is as pathetically thankful as if he had been rising from some such Royal Feast as that great King *Abashuerus* once made: And indeed when ever I see him I find him in such a contented thankful frame as if he was made up of it, his breath smelling so much of Heaven gives me good ground to conclude, that he is daily fed from such a one as *Abashuerus* do I say, no, from his betters board.

Hence take notice, O my Soul, in how narrow a room, as to these outward things, Contentment lies; or how little a Christian is beholden to the World for his Contentment; indeed to speak truth just none at all.

And further, observe what mistaken Sentiments the Men of the World generally have about the condition of God's People in it, which they look upon as very miserable; indeed as for our great Lords and Ladies who dwell in their stately Pallaces, which Nature and Art, set upon the stretch, hath prepared them, and that have Tables richly spread and fully furnished, that with the rich Sensuallist in the Gospel fare deliciously every day, such as in all respects seem to have the World at will, all that heart can wish, these they call happy. But then, as for these poor Christians who have scarce any thing besides their God, besides a poor hungry empty Promise (as they take it) to live upon, such as are glad of one of these little smoaky huts to dwell in, such as are fain sometimes to miss a Meal, and oft to take up with a short one, such as must tarry for their Dinner sometimes till God in his
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Providence is pleased to send something in to furnish the Table with, and the like, these, in their account, are poor miserable wretches, if the World hath any such in it. But hold, for all your wit and hast you are much mistaken; our God is more to us then you are aware of: Those Promises of his which you look upon as poor hungry naked empty things, we find them by experience to be both Meat, Drink and Cloaths to us; and, that both in the Want, and also in the Enjoyment of such things: We have less then you, and yet, with your leave, we have more: Our Houses are not so Fine and Stately as yours, but we have more of God and Heaven in them; We grant, you out-doe us, as to your Fare, but, for all that, we know, that we have better Chear: That self-same hand which gave us Christ, giveth us our *Daily Bread*; And so the least of our Mkrries is bigger then the greatest of yours, because it comes from a higher Fountain, even that of God's special Covenant-Love; when yours come onely from his Common Bounty and Providence; And this, be it known unto you, makes our short Commons much sweeter and better unto us, then your Green, Full grown Pastures are, or can be unto you: This makes our Crust better unto us, then your whole Loafe is to you; Come and see; come and make a Trial of Religion but as far as we have done, and you shall have that Mysterious Riddle unfolded to you, [*As having nothing, and yet possessing all things*] a thing as plain and obvious unto us, as Mathematical Demonstration can make any thing appear to you: And if you should fear loosing any thing

thing by this Adventure, and dare not take our word for the contrary, you shall have our Makers Bond for your Security; Lord, that the poor blind World was but Undeceived!

Meditation II.

Upon the sight of a great many Burning Candles in a Dark Night.

WHat a dismal dark Night is this, in which neither Moon nor Stars appear? But yet tho' those bright Illuminated Bodies be by yonder Black Clouds obscured and hid from my sight, yet may one not think, that this great number of Candles, in so many Shops and Chamber-windows, presenting themselves to my present view, twinckling and sparkling in my eyes, some higher, some lower, some larger and brighter, others smaller and more dim, some fixed, and others in motion; May one not fancy, I say, that this looks like an imitation, or faint resemblance of them, as if the Stars of Heaven had forsaken their Orbs, the high and elevated Stations they were in, and were come down to fix with us in this low and dirty Region of ours. But yet notwithstanding all these Lights shining, almost round about me, yet its Night with me still, and a very dark one, which makes me grope, and take my steps very slowly, and uncomfortably, with much carefulness and fear; And truly, was there Star and Moon-light too, it would still

still be Night for all that, until the Suns return shall make it Day, and then, indeed, all those lesser Lights, will, by degrees, disappear and vanish quite out of sight, and, being needless, will not at all be missed by me. Methinks, O my Soul, here thou may'st see that which fitly minds thee of thy sad condition, when under Spiritual Desertions, in that dark and gloomy Day, that Day, or rather Night of Clouds and thick Darkness, when thou walkest in Darkness, seeing no Light; when thy God is pleased to hide his Face, when the Sun of Righteousness hath withdrawn himself, and shineth not upon thee; when the Comforter that should relieve thee, being provoked and grieved, is gone far from thee, so that he seems not only out of sight, but also out of call; when the exceeding great and precious Promises, with which the Blessed Book of God is so sweetly Bespangled, afford thee no Light or Comfort, each of them having, to thy apprehension [*Hands off*] Written in the front of them, and so seeming to speak as much Terror as ever they spake Comfort to thee: When Holy Duties and Ordinances are also dark, yea darker then other common things, by how much they use to be more light at other times.

When thou art in this doleful plight, tho' thou hast never so many outward Creature-comforts about thee, they availe thee nothing, as to the making of it Day, they signifie no more to thee, in this respect, then these Candles do with their poor dim shine this Dark Night; notwithstanding them, thou canst not chuse but walk very heavily and disconsolately; It is Night with thee still, until it please
the

the Bright and Glorious Sun of Righteousness to break forth upon thee again, which is indeed enough to turn the blackest Darkest Night immediately into the brightest Day: Lord set, and ever keep my Soul under the Light of thy Loving Countenance, and then, tho' it please thee to extinguish more of these poor dim Candle-lights, my outward Creature Comforts, I will not Complain; nay, indeed, when it is so with me, I find I cannot; My God, thou art enough for me; Thou fillest me Lord; thou art more then I can hold; enlarge and fill Lord; O enlarge! O fill!

But further, as I now being in the Dark, take each step with more carefulness and fear then I use to do, when I have the Light shining about me; so I have obscured sometimes, when I have been in a dark deserted estate, so far as to want any thing of sensible Comfort; yet, my care of my ways, and fear of offending God by Sin, hath been as great, nay greater then at other times, which hath made me more moderate, and submissive in my desires after Comforts; Lord, Comfort is very sweet, but Grace and Holiness is better; better in it self, yea, and the best the only way to it.

Meditation 12.

*Upon observing the dirtiness of my Fingers,
after the Counting a Sum of Money.*

WHO would think this, that were not used to the telling of Money themselves, or that had not observed the like effect in others? This heap of Silver, how it shines and glisters? The most Men who have to do with this so much adored Mettal, their eyes are so dazled by it, that they cannot see the Sun of Righteousness, that most Compleat, Perfect and Matchless Beauty: But notwithstanding its fair and glittering looks and promises, every piece assuring me that it hath been under the Refiners hand; yet, upon the telling of it over, I find my fingers are sullied and dirtied, as tho' I had been raking with them in the Earth, out of the Bowels of which it was taken. I do not find it thus upon my taking, or lightly turning over a piece or two; And so the poor honest Labouring Man, who is not troubled with the telling of Fifties and Hundreds, but only when he hath done his days Work to receive his Penny; his fingers are not so fouled by that, as mine now are in the Telling over this greater Sum, and that insensibly I know not how.

Methinks this may afford me a fair and lively Emblem of the guilt and filth, which, alas, I too too frequently contract, and that insensibly too sometimes, even in the use of lawful things; God is not an hard unkind Master, Religion is not such a severe thing, as some;
but

out of Prejudice, represent it to be, as denying and forbidding the moderate, cheerful, pious use of Outward Comforts and Delights; I may, with God's free leave, make use of the good Creatures he affords me, not only for meer necessity, to support my Natural Life, but also for my delight; And so I may not only Eat and Drink, and Sleep, and Labour in my Calling, but also I may sometimes use some innocent and moderate Recreation; As I must Read God's Holy Word, Meditate, Pray, and hear Sermons, and Read Pious Authors; so now and then I may seasonably Read a Piece of *History*, or entertain a Friend with Cheerful Discourse for my Diversion: But, alas, tho' such things are innocent, and lawful in themselves, yet through my immoderate irregular use, and ill management of them, I ordinarily come off from them with my heart defiled, as I now do from the Telling of this Money (which appears cleanly enough, every Piece of it, to any ones thinking) with dirty fingers.

And, as I should be ashamed to go with these hands to my Dinner, until I have washed them, or to touch any thing that's neat and cleanly; So blush, O my Soul, to think of going in the Case before-mention'd, without a fresh particular washing in that precious Laver the Blood of a dear Jesus, unto any of thy Spiritual Meals, or of touching any thing that is Sacred and Holy.

This Reflection brings to my Mind the practice of the *Pharisees*, and the rest of the *Jews* of Old, in Compliance with the Tradition of the Elders, which was to wash often; And

when they came from the Market, except they washed, not to eat, Mark 7. 3, 4. which, tho' alas it was a Proud, Self-conceited, Fond, and Superstitious Custom in them; yet take it in a Spiritual Sence, and then it is sufficiently Justifiable, highly Commendable, and absolutely necessary; In that Sence, O my Soul, see thou go and do likewise.

Meditation 13..

Upon my Paying a Large Sum of Money in way of Exchange for a London-Bill.

WHat is this that I am doing? Affords it nothing that's Instructive? If a Stranger should come in now, and see me giving this Gentleman such a heap of good hard Money for this little Shred of Paper, with two or three Lines Written in it, he knows not what; which, materially considered, is not worth half a Farthing; supposing him, I say, a stranger to this way of Trading, Would he not reckon me to be a meer Natural, and be ready to say, The Fool and his Money is easily parted? Or if he did understand the Contents of this Bill, yet he would still be of the same opinion, if he did not believe that there was such a Place as the City of London, where my Bill is made payable, or that there was such a Man as Mr. ——— there, on whom its drawn, or that he and the Drawer were some poor Men, neither of them worth a Groat, and so not able to Pay it, he would still be ready to say,

say, The Fool is just throwing away all this good Money: But I know, and am well assured of the contrary to all this, as are all the VVise Men in the Town, who have to do with the said Persons, and Trade too, and from the said place: VVe know that there is such a place as *London*, and that the Persons I have to do with in this Bill, are very Responsible, and so that this Bill is really of as much value as the Money I pay in way of Exchange for it, and that this is a very Commodious and advantageous way of Trading; So that such a Person's Censure would be so far from being Just and Reasonable, and to be heeded or regarded by me, that he would justly deserve the Censure of Notorious Ignorance, Incredulity and Folly by it himself.

Methinks just such kind of gross mistakes those who would fain be accounted the great wits of the World are ordinarily guilty of, in the judgment, which with equal confidence and folly, they pass upon the poor godly Mans adventures, whose way of Trading they are utter strangers to; when they see him deny himself, see him ready at God's call to expose his Person, his Estate, his all in the World, in the cause of his dear Jesus Christ and the Gospel: When they see him upon all occasions ready to give liberally and freely, out of that little Estate he hath, unto Pious and Charitable uses, and all this upon the Credit of two or three lines in his Bible, that God will surely repay him with advantage at least in another World; which alas they know not how to value any otherwise then according to the price of the Book, which whole volume
Q 2 they

they can have for under a Crown; upon this, I say, their inward thoughts at least are, that he is a poor weak-brained senseless sot, a silly *Abram* indeed, which prophane scoff the poor wretches sometimes have in their Mouths: But for all this, *Wisdom is justified of her Children*, and will certainly justify the choice and course of her Children in due time; and so such ignorant prophane scoffers are not to be regarded by us.

Whatsoever you do, we believe that God is, and that he is a most bountiful rewarder of them that diligently seek him: If you do not know, do not in your hearts believe that there is such a place as Heaven, yet we have the highest assurance to the contrary that reasonable Creatures upon Earth can imagin or desire: It is the great place of our Trading, our City-conversation is there more or less every day: And whatever credit our great Correspondent there hath with you, yet be it known unto you, to his honour, that a penny in a Promise of his is as good to us, when we are truly our selves, as one in our Purse. We know and are assured that he is Truth it self, and have ever found him exactly punctual as thousands have done before us, even as many as ever tried him. Will you come and prove him too? We wish with our hearts and Souls you would: But however if not, we desire you would leave off your jeering scoffing trade; Judge nothing before the time, the Lord is at hand: Hold Tongue but till you and we meet before him at the great day, and then, if with them winking scornful eyes of yours, you do not see us receive

ceive our hundred fold, we give you free leave to mock and brand us at your pleasure, as the greatest and most Egregious fools that ever was: But in the mean time we assure you that we know in whom we have believed.

Meditation 14.

Upon the uselessness of my neglected Watch.

WHat a pretty little Engin is this? How useful and delightful a companion it hath been to me sometimes, letting me know how my precious hours pass from me, tho' it is indeed a thing which calls for deep sorrow of heart, when I reflect upon my way of spending them, in doing nothing, or in that which is worse, in meer Vanity and Sin.

But this Watch, now since I let it down two or three nights ago, it lies in my pocket as an useless burdensome thing which I care not for casting my eyes upon.

And yet truly when I think how it hath gone amiss of late, (the spring not being wound up to a due height) so methinks I am as well without it, as well now it doth not go as when it did, nay in some respects better, as I am now eased of the care and trouble of winding of it up, and am not now in danger of being deceived by it, in the measuring of my time as I was before.

But yet, for all this, I do not hereupon condemn all Watches as useless, burdensome and dangerous things, nor do I, now in a pet,

resolve to throw away this of mine, but one the contrary I think to go to a skillful Watch-maker, and get him to set it in order, that so it may be an useful delightful Companion to me again.

Methinks this fairly invites me to consider of a thing, which alas, I have had too much sad experience of, *scilicet*, That one ~~my~~ so manage their spiritual Watch and Diary, as that it may become an useles burdensome, yea and a dangerous mischeifous thing too; indeed, when rightly managed, this is an excellent means to tell me what time a day it is with my Soul as I have sometimes found it: Then a Corruption or Temptation doth not stir but I have them presently: Not a motion of God, which either turns his face or his back upon me, but I am presently sensible of it, and the like: But alas, how often, through a formal careless management of it, I find it quite otherwise? Then Sin and Satan and the World make a thoroughfare of my poor Soul from day to day, and I take little or no notice of it: God makes a motion towards me and is gone again before I take notice of him: And further, here is this great mischief of it, by the bare outward discharge of such duties, I am laid open to this Temptation to bear my self in hand that I am something, when, it may be, I am nothing. Look about thee, O my Soul! But yet hereupon I am not to condemn this duty in it self as useles and unprofitable in others whose Watches go better then mine; nor am I hereupon to neglect it and lay it aside my self, but on the contrary, as I deal with my Watch so must I deal with my

my Heart here, go to God who made and exactly knows every little wheel and motion in it, and can set all at rights again; Lord, wind up the spring to a due pitch of Spirituallity, Seriousness and diligence! Let me not be one of those most miserably undone Souls whom Religion helps to undo!

Meditation 15.

Upon my securing another House before I gave my Landlady warning.

I am but a fool for this World, as is well known to such as are acquainted with me, (and alas, which cuts me to the Heart, I am no body for the next neither! O how great is my foolishness! Surely I am more brutish then any Man!) but yet I question not but that the great wits of the World would be ready to commend me as taking a wise and prudent course in this business: Being, upon divers accounts, necessitated to think of removing my habitation, yet I would not give my Landlady warning, nor let her understand my full resolution to leave her house until I had made some provission for my self elsewhere, and that for fear least I should not in convenient time hear of an House more to my mind, and so least she should be beforehand with me, and give me warning, and thereby run me on Rocks, forcing me to close with some incommodious dwelling, to the prejudice of my Health and Trade, or, at least, put

my thoughts into a hurry about it: All this now is prevented by a little forecast.

Canst thou pick nothing out of this, O my Soul? Consider thou art not the Landlord of the House wherein thou dwellest, but a Tennant, and a Tennant at will: The Lord may send out a writ of ejectment against thee when he pleaseth; and truly considering what a woeful bad Tennant thou has been, daily running more and more in errors; wonder, O my Soul, that he hath not done it long ere this! Consider further, the Lord, tho' he was not bound to it, yet hath been graciously pleased to give thee warning time after time: What other is the language of those distempers, and sensible decays thou findest in this clay Tabernacle of thine but such as this? In time he laying out, O poor Soul, and elsewhere providing for thy self: What means the cracking, shrinking and moulding down of one part after another? Is it not to let thee understand, that this poor Cottage which at present thou inhabitest, will not be long Tennantable for thee, that it will down about thine ears shortly? Now, O my Soul, wilt thou be wise? O then lay out for thy self in time; and take this into thy serious thoughts I charge thee, the great Landlord of both Worlds he hath but two great Houses for Souls in the next, Heaven and Hell, his Palace and his Prison; into one of these thou must enter, and there be fixed for ever, as soon as thou turnest out here.

The Lord in his infinite condescension is so fair to thee as to give thee a true and impartial account of both, and so gracious as
here

here to give thee liberty of choice, but commands thee to chose the better, to take Heaven.

Methinks now, O my Soul, thou shouldest not need to desire time to consider of it, but that thou shouldest immediatly fix upon Heaven: But, if it must be so, go and consult the Map, turn over thy Bible; but what thou dost do quickly, delay not, for that hath been the undoing of thousands: Death will certainly and shortly come with God's Commission in it's hand to eject thee, and then there is no withstanding: It was in vain to think of disputing his Commission, when he comes, out thou must without delay: Now see thou be beforehand with him, do not put the matter off till the last pinch: Admit poor Souls to be safe in the main, yet what dismal circumstances they are in when they see their time just expiring, and know not where they must spend their Eternity, but it may be hear the Devil and their own Hearts telling them loudly and confidently enough that it must be in the bottom of Hell, and think they hear God say so too. Ah poor hearts! O my Soul, why art thou thus content to let matters lie at so much uncertaintie? Eternal Joys, Eternal Torments, these are no Childs plays; O Cursed trifling and indifferency! O Cursed negligence and sloth! Well, the Lord hath, as I may say, drawn a Lease with his hand and Seal at it, I should rather say, a free Deed of Gift of Heaven, to have and to hold for ever, in his Word, and gives thee leave to go and put thy Name in if thou wilt; see thou do it
without

without delay : Lord, thou hast my Heart
and Hand,

Joseph Barrett.

Let this thing be ratified in Heaven. *Amen.*

Meditation 16.

Upon the Preparing my New House for me.

WHat busie doings is here ? How many hands are here at work ? Here's Carpenter, Masoner, Smith and Joyner, and divers of them ; sometimes I observe here is Eight Persons, or more, employed, and yet there's Work enough for them all, in fitting up this Old House for me ; A great deal here is to be done, tho' the Foundation and Main VVork stand ; yet here are some parts to be taken away, and what a stinking dust it makes when they potter in this Old VVall. Again, other parts are to be added, this and that Conveniency to be made ; not a Room in it but here's something or other done in it, which casts it into quite another form, that it scarce looks like the same.

I desire that all passages about this my remove, may suggest something or other to me about my great remove into the other VVorld.

Indeed, here I must turn the Subject of my Discourse from the House to the (I hope) intended

tended Inhabitant; Heaven is ready for thee, O my Soul, wast thou but ready for it; but alas, How far art thou from being so? O how much to be undone, and how much to be done before it will come to that?

VVell, be not yet discouraged, O my Soul, the Lord is at work in thee, both by his Ordinances and Providences, pulling down, and building up, and, I trust, he will not leave thee, though such a sorry and Cross-grain'd VVretch, until he hath made a Compleat Piece of thee, and then for Heaven forthwith; It shall not be in the power of Men or Devils to detain thee one Moment.

VVell, since matters ly thus, O my Soul, VVilt thou not endeavour to ly fair, when the Lord comes with his Ax, his Hammer, his Plain, &c. VVilt thou not diligently, with all readines of Mind, close in with the Blessed Spirit of God, the Great Artificer, or Agent, under Christ, in fitting and preparing Souls, by Grace, for Glory? Doth it not put thee to the Blush, to think that Heaven hath staid for thee so long? Is not Heaven better than this Earth? Yea, saith my Soul, to be with Christ, is best of all.

Meditation 17.

Upon the Lighting my Candle, after I had, by an Accident, put it out.

MY Candlestick standing somewhat tickle, by a touch of my Sleeve I threw it down, and by the fall extinguished my Candle; This, at first, I looked upon as an unhappy accident, as it gave me an unwellcome diversion in the Work I was employed about; But, upon second thoughts, I changed my Mind concerning it, upon the account of a profitable reflection, which, by the means of a little Circumstance, about this action, I had a fair occasion to make; For I observed, that catching up my Candle presently, while there was yet fire in the Wick, notwithstanding the Blaze was extinct, and putting it to the Fire, it lighted presently, with a very little touch, if not before it approached so near as to touch the Burning-Coal I put it to.

This brought to my Mind that, which I have frequently experienc'd, with respect to Spiritual Decays and Declinings; I hope there is in my heart a Spark which is of the Lord's kindling; And this poor, small, but precious Spark, he is sometimes pleased to blow up into a little Assending Flame: But, alas! what by the means of the contrary Principles of Sin and Corruption within (which my heart sadly abounds with) and what by the frequent and violent gusts of Temptation, from Satan and the World without, this poor languid thing

thing is almost continually in danger of being extinguish'd, and put out, and frequently is so, as to my present sense and feeling; But now, if the Lord enable me to watch my heart any thing narrowly, so as to observe and take notice of his Withdrawments, and of my spiritual decays and declinings at the beginning of them, and then, forthwith, by Repentance and Faith, to Address my self to him for Grace and Peace (the reviving and restoring of them) who is the Fountain, the first Author, Maintainer, and Compleator of both; I find then the matter is more easily Retrieved, the Life and Vigor of Grace and Comfort more easily regained; But then, if I am remiss and careless, and let the matter go too far, then it is done with much greater difficulty; O how many heavy Groans, and hard Struggles it cost me then! Remember this, O my Soul, and be wise for time to come.

Meditation 18.

*Upon my Watch's loosing, or going too slow,
and the occasion of it.*

TAKING out my Watch, which for a considerable time of late hath been daily getting, I was somewhat surprized to see it on a suddain got into the contrary extrem, it having lost as much in a day as formerly it used to get, and this without any change in the Weather, or my contributing any thing towards this alteration by letting down the
spring:

spring: I began hereupon to consider with my self what might be the cause of this suddain change; and as my thoughts were at work, the true cause thereof, as I rationally apprehend, presently occurred to my mind. *scilicet*, This morning I changed my Cloathes, putting on those which had lain by me a considerable time unworn, and so the moistness or dampness of my leather Pocket, in which I put my Watch, I suppose, had that influence upon it, tho' not so as quite to stop, yet so as thus to retard its motion: This brought to my mind a pretty pertinent, tho' a melancholly, uncomfortable, reflection upon a matter which hath sometimes fallen under my observation in others, and of which, alas, I have had but too much sad experience my self, *scilicet*, The sad unhappy fate of some poor hearts removing out of good, Religious, Godly Families into Profane, Irreligious, Ungodly ones, upon which some that were really good, yea and considerably forward before, have been presently seen apparently to decline and grow more remiss, careless and indifferent: And such as were only seemingly good before, being got from under restraint and into a more proper Element, have appeared really bad, and have been growing more and more extreemly so: And as for my self, tho' it hath been my great priviledge ever to have my lot cast in good Families, a mercy which extreemly inhaunceth my account, which, alas, God knows, I am far from knowing how to make up any thing tollerably: The good Lord pitty, humble and forgive me! Tho' I have been thus priviledged (I say) yet as I have occasionally, for
a time,

a time, fallen into vain and sinful Company, how mischievous it hath been to my poor Soul : It hath been mighty prejudicial to me, as frequent observation and experience, even from Childhood, hath at a very sad and costly rate informed me.

Physitians tell us, and that not without the authority both of Reason and Experience, that a person, who values his Health, should have no small regard to the salubrity or insalubrity of the Air he lives in : I doubt not but this rule will hold good in Divinity as well : That Man surely who doth not hate his own Soul, who is not fond of Sin and Hell, must carefully avoid wicked profane Places, Families and all such Company, at least love to and delight in it : The Lord grant I ever may.

Meditation 19.

Upon a Light occasioned by a Snow.

THis strange Light in my Windows, proceeding from this great Snow, I find as oft as I lift up my head from my Book attracting my eyes, and as often commanding my thoughts ; Now, since it must be so, its certainly my wisdom to see, if it may be, to get something by the thoughts I find my self under a necessity of laying out upon it : And methinks here is one thing readily offering it self which seems to have a somewhat promising look, if a cold and barren heart do not defeat and cut me short of it : I cannot but take
notice

notice of a highly differing, indeed a quite contrary quality attending the Light which proceeds from this Snow, and that which proceeds from the Sun; in the emanations or beams which proceed from the latter there is Light and Heat conjoyn'd, but here it is Light and Cold.

Methinks now this fairly represents to me the great difference that there is between the Knowledge which is seated in the head of the Natural Unregenerate person, and that which hath also taken possession of the heart of the Sanctified Holy Soul: The former is many times very bright and clear, such as attracts the eyes and raiseth the admiration of others. They cannot but wonder at their excellent notions, being able, it may be, to discourse like Angels of the great things of God and Religion, but alas, all the while their hearts are as cold as a Snow-ball; But then the real Godly Soul, be his knowledge more or less, it is in some measure warm, and commonly it tends to the warming of others: Turn in upon thy self, O my Soul; And O, what cause I find, without any such thing, as deserves the Name of Searching, to complain of these cold Notions, which, if at all, do very little warm my heart, or influence my life! The Lord deliver me from them, at least from trusting in them! Let me not value my self by that which makes so many Hypocrites: Indeed, I have no Knowledge to spare, for, I must acknowledge, that after all my Hearing and Reading, and Study (if my few broken Thoughts may go by that Name) I am yet a meer *Nicodemus* in the Matters of God and Religion

Religion to this day; But, Lord deliver me from this Ill Quality! O for more of the Fire of the Sanctuary! Let Knowledge and Devotion be sweetly conjoynd in my Soul, go hand in hand, and mutually influence, and assist one another.

Meditation 20.

Upon a very Sharp Cold Season.

I Read that the Lord hath made Summer and Winter; and indeed the latter as well as the former, hath that in it, which sufficiently Intitles, that God, who is Excellent in Councel, and wonderful in working, the Author of it. *He giveth Snow like Wooll (saith the Psalmist) He scattereth his hoary Frost like Asbes, He casteth forth his Ice like Morfells, and who can stand before his Cold! Psal. 147. 16, 17.*

And truly the present Season is such, as gives me frequent occasion to give God Thanks for the Coal, as well as the Gold and Silver Mines. The General Note, especially among such as are more tender and delicate, its very Sharp, very Cold, which, indeed, is no News, tho' it be almost all the Talk; But, amongst the rest, I can hear some of those honest Country Men, who regard not so much their present ease, delight and pleasure, as their after Profit; I can hear them giving in their judgment thus; Its very Sharp, but seasonable; This Weather (say they) doth our

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Land

Land good, makes it Mellow, and prepares it for the Plow when its gone; This Snow keeps our Corn warm (as indeed the Inspired Prophet compares it to Wool) defends it from the Bleak Winds, which are many times very prejudicial to it; It also kills our Wads, and destroys our Vermin. Methinks the same, may I say, in the Commendation of Afflictions, when the Lord is pleased to Sanctify them; O what mellow hearts they sometimes make! A Sanctify'd Affliction is an excellent preparation for the Gospel-Plow: By this means the Spiritual Seeds-man shall do his work with abundantly more ease, and with more hopes of a plentiful Crop; And where this Seed is already in the Ground, Grace wrought in the Heart, Afflictions, many times, helps to keep it warm, are a means to preserve and defend the Soul from the Malignity of many a dangerous Temptation: I thank my God for the little Experience I have had of these things, I question not but others have much more; And as they are Friends to the Graces of God's People, they must needs be Enemies to their Lusts, those mischievous Vermin, those stinking choaking Weeds, which, alas, the best Ground, the best Hearts do too much abound with. Let others bless themselves in their great continued and growing outward Prosperity, Blessed be God for seasonable and Sanctified Afflictions, saith my Soul: Lord I find I need them, and, as thou art pleased to manage them, they do me, I cannot tell how much good; and therefore let the Flesh say what it will, I do Love and Bless thee for them, and I will do it; yea, I do not question
but

but this will be a considerable part of my *Song* in Heaven ; Tho' I shall then never feel them more, yet I trust I shall never never forget to Bless God for the Blessed Fruits of them which I shall there reap to the full : Indeed sometimes I am at a little loss and cannot readily say whether God doth me more good by Afflictions or by Ordinances ; I am confident of this, the one would not do me so much good without the other : Thanks be to God for the sweet Conjunction of them both ! Distrust, Impatience, Discontent fy on you ! Away with you ! Never see my face more ! O that thou wouldst so say Lord, then so it should be : But, alas, that I fear will not be till I also hear thee say, Come up hither ; O then make hast.

Indeed Afflictions do not do good to all Persons ; This hard Weather hath a good effect upon the Corn-land, but its otherwise with the High-ways : Indeed they are better for it just for the present while it lasteth, but when this Weather breaks we shall find them rottener and worse then before : Methinks just thus it is with unsanctified graceless Souls with respect to Affliction : O my Soul, see that the little fruit thou at any times gettest by Afflictions be such as doth remain.

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Occasio-

Occasional Meditations.

Part II.

Meditation 1.

Upon the Cutting of my Nails.

AS far as my Heart and my Finger ends are distant, a warm Spiritual Meditation now might bring them together to my great advantage: This is but a small Circumstance, yet (as small and unpromising as it may look at first view) it need not be wholly a barren one, unless a bad Heart will have it so.

It hath pleased the Lord, the most full and rightful Proprietor, the most Holy, Wise and gracious disposer of all things, by a late violent Storm to make a considerable breach in my Estate, the Tidings of which came to me yesterday: Now methinks, there are several things in this action I am about (as little as I thought of it when I begun) which may properly enough be accommodated to my present case, and prompt very useful meditations to me in relation to it.

I am fearfully and wonderfully made (saith the Psalmist) Curiously wrought,---] These Nails of mine are part of that Curious Needlework: As the Lord hath placed them they

are beautiful, and Ornament to my Fingers; and as they are Ornamental, so are they several ways useful too. But tho' they are a part, yet are they one of the most inconsiderable parts of it. How much better it had been for me to have wanted or to loose a Nail then a Joynt in my Finger, much more then an Hand, an Eye or the like? They have some Beauty, Excellency and usefulness in them, if considered absolutely in themselves, but none, if considered comparatively with the other parts of my Body which do so far excel.

So these worldly things, part of which the Lord hath now taken from me, considered in themselves, as they are of God's making and giving, and as suited to my present state and outward necessities, thus considered they have some goodness, worth and excellency in them. An Holy Good God never made, much less gave to any Child of his, any thing that was otherwise then good. (Then by the way I may observe that to be sure Sin can be no Creature of his.)

They serve outwardly to accomplish a Man, they make a Man shine and glitter wonderfully in the eyes of the World: They are also useful, in their kind, to those that have them, supplying their outward necessities so far as they can reach, and as those that have them have also power given them to eat thereof, to make use of them: And they put those that have them into a Capacity of being helpful to others too, to feed more Bellies and Cloath more Backs then their own, if the Lord be pleased withall to give them hearts

to

to do so: These things have some good in them, but it is not of the best sort of good by many degrees; there are many Natural good things which far excell Riches, and there are Moral good things which far excell them all. O but then, there are Spiritual and Eternal good things which do far more overtop, and overballance these too: A lovely dear Jesus, where shall we peer that Pearl? Can either Heaven or Earth do it? Are Worldly Riches to be compared with Grace? With that Divine Love that ever flameth in the Heart of God toward his chosen ones, or with the Blessed felicitating fruits and effects of it communicated to them? Blush, O my Soul, and rise with indignation and abhorrence at the thoughts of such a comparison as this; One thing is needful, but Riches are none of it: What Essential part of a Christian doth Riches serve to constitute or make up? Just none at all: Are they necessary to his Being? Are they necessary to his Happiness? No such matter. Is not this a real Truth (if the Word of Truth may be allowed as such) that to have God for my God is to inherit all things? And so, that to have God, is as much as to have God and all the World, and that to have him alone is infinitely more then to have all the World, and a Thousand more such Worlds without him? Dost thou know, O my Soul, what useful application to make of these broken hints?

Doth a Stoickall Senselessness, a Sottish Stupidity become thee? Is this Rod to be despised: On the other hand, hast thou any Colour for any thing which so much as looks like

like Impatience, murmuring, fretting or fainting? And wilt thou carefully endeavour to avoid these two extreams? Yea, and dost thou now apprehend any better then before the reasonableness of that Doctrin, which soundeth so wonderful strangely and harshly to a Carnal ear, namely, that of being not only Patient, but also Joyful in Tribulation? Yea, and hast thou now, in some measure, in thy self a real experimental proof of the practicableness of that Doctrin, which passeth with the most for an impossibility, at least wilt thou not cease Praying and striving to the utmost till thou hast so? The Lord help me a poor vile worse than nothing! Yea, and blessed be my dear and infinitely gracious both giving and taking God, so far as he is pleased to do so! But to proceed, when these Nails of mine are grown too long, then they loose their beauty and comeliness, and become a deformity to my Fingers, of themselves, and are apt to gather much dirt and filth underneath them too: Yea, and when they are thus overgrown, they loose a great part of their usefulness also, making my Fingers more unactive and clumsy in performing of their several Offices: And further still, when it is thus, they are many times positively injurious both to my self and others, as they are apt to scratch and vex, and sometimes fetch blood it may be.

Why truly it is much what thus in reference to these Worldly things; Whatever these carnal Hearts of ours think, which are still for enlarging their borders, and building their Barns bigger, which never think they have enough

nough of the World, but are still gaping for more, yet there is certainly a possibility of having too much, as well as of having too little; and I do not know that I shall overshoot the truth if I say there is a greater danger of the two, and a greater mischief thereby, especially as to holy Souls; Let common Experience and observation speak.

I may have my garment made too wide or too long, as well as too narrow or too short; And when it is so how unhandsome it is? It is very unbecoming, yea and troublesome too, especially when I am buisy and in Motion, as Religion requires I should always be: In my Spiritual Trade I have continually Business enough to fill my hands, and have no time allowed for Idleness.

And are not these things the occasion of much Sin to poor Souls, the filthiest thing in the World, such as is not to be paraleled? Is not Carnality and Sensuality both bred and fed thereby? Do they not occasion Pride, Contempt of others, Neglect of God, of precious Immortal Souls, and the great things of the unseen Eternal World, and I cannot tell what? Superfluous Riches makes those that are filthy more filthy still, and the best of Saints less Holy: They make Souls rusty, yea and resty too; Particularly to in~~stance~~ in *-stance* works of Charity, do they not make men very clumsy here? One at first blush would think it a very strange thing, especially in any truly pious Godly Man, and yet, alas, it is too apparently true even as to such, that the Richer they grow, ordinarily, yea constantly, unless their Graces grow as fast as their Riches, the

the more grudging and niggardly they grow in real works of Charity: The reason is obvious as can be to any observing experienced Christian, *scilicet*; because the faster the World comes in upon us, the more eagerly our carnal Hearts are prone to pursue it, it being no more or better to us here then Drink is to a poor Creature in a *Dropsy* or high *Fever* which doth but feed his Distemper, and so encrease his thirst: And so, while thus we have not enough for our selves, we have very little to spare for others; Or because the more we have of the World, the more prone we are to love it, and the more we love it the more loath we are to part with it.

And do not these things many times make Men very mischeivous to themselves? O! what cutting cares, Conscience wounding Sins are these excessive Estates many times the sad occasions of? And who are the great pinchers and Oppressors of others? Are they not usually such as are overgrown with Worldly Riches? Now turn in here upon thy self, O my Soul! It may be thou art ready to think from the bulk and quantity of thy outward Estate that surely it should not be an overgrown one: But consider that rule will not hold good, nor is it by any means to be admitted here, for which thou hast an ocular demonstration before thee: Thou seest plainly that Nail which is but long enough and broad enough for one Finger, would be too long and too broad was it placed upon another; That Garment that fits me very well, would by no means fit my little Son: That Estate may be too big for one Person, which

is not big enough for another. Here let the Lord be Judge for thee, who by his late Providence seems to have given his sense (which is ever according to truth) in the affirmative. Now turn in upon thy self, and if thou canst come off any thing tollerably from some of the forementioned particulars, yet I am afraid others of them will sorely gravel thee; And if so, thou knowest what thou hast to do: O Repent! Humble thy self under the mighty hand of God; Justify him, and condemn thy self; Flee to Christ. Is the Lord angry? No Sanctuary like the Blood of Christ; Return to him that smites thee: In the strength of Christ fall to the work of Reformation sincerely and without delay.

But further, when my Nails are come to this I think it time to take my Knife and cut them. Why so the Lord deals with our Estates; indeed as for Wicked Men, he doth not take that care of them here, as he doth of his own dear Children; so their outward Prosperity is generally more abundant uninterrupted and of longer continuance, tho' they most abuse it.

Amongst other Reasons they have a measure of sin, which an Holy God, in Just Judgment, permits them this opportunity to fill up; And he hath Scratching Work to be done, and these are the fittest Tools and Instruments to do such Work for him, and therefore he lets their Nails grow longer; But as for his own Children, he will be sure to pare theirs; when their Estates begin to be too big, too heavy for their Graces, and so begins to sink them into Sensuality, or Worldliness,

liness, or any other sin, then he caseth them of that mischievous Clay-load; And truly its well for them that he doth so; otherwise, if forsaken of him, and left unto themselves, they would, as well as any others sink, not only into Earth, but by and by into Hell too: Thus the Lord hath dealt with thee; Be silent, O my Soul, but be Prayer-full, and, amongst the rest, by no means, forget to be sincerely thankful.

But further, I do observe, when I have cut my Nails, the dirt that was underneath doth more plainly appear; I might have seen it before, but seldom regard it; but, by this means, my eyes are fixed upon it, and it is laid open and bare before them; And as by this means it is more plainly discovered, so likewise more easily removed; And is it not so here? The Lord hath been paring my Nails, my Estate, O let me not overlook the Dirt! Upon the few poor Reflections I have made, O how many sins stare me in the Face? so many, and those so great, that (as blind as I am in Spirituals) I am not able to overlook them; so many, that I know not where to fix this Storm; O my Soul, I love thee for looking this way; Be encouraged, go on! But take notice withall, that I do not think it enough barely to see this Dirt, and rest satisfied there, but I scrape it out; So be not thou satisfied to discover sin, but away with it; Thou hast a peculiar advantage before thee now, as it is thus laid bare; And art thou at a loss in this, not knowing what is the particular Sin which hath raised this Storm? Do what thou canst to find it out: But if thou should'st

should'st still continue in the dark in this matter, I'll tell what to do, Cast every *Jonah* over-board, I mean every sin, for the best, I mean the least of them, is no better; Therefore let not thy eye pitty, or spare great or small, old or young, not one of the kind, and, in so doing, thou wilt be sure to have it; Lord, for another Shipwreck amongst my Lusts! This would even make former things to be forgotten.

But further, here are no deep sighs, no Salt Streams upon this occasion: I part with these superfluous Nails with all imaginable quietness and sedateness of Spirit; Many good Reasons that I should do so, which plainly Convict the contrary, as worse then Childish.

It is but a part of my Nails that I am now losing, and not my Flesh, much less my Life: There is a wide difference, sure, between a Mans sitting down, under an Officious Barbers hand, in order to lose his Beard, and anothers laying his Neck upon the Block before the Executioner, in order to lose his Life: It is my Nails, and not any of my Limbs, that are now going: If I was losing an Arm, or the like, there was Reason I should take it more to heart; why so here; What is that which thou hast lost? It is but thy Estate, and but part of that neither: That thou hast lost, is one of the most inconsiderable things belonging to thee. The Lord hath given thee a tast of several things, which, tho' not the best things, yet are to be preferred before Riches, which he yet continues to thee: Indeed, thou hast nothing to be Proud of, but
know

know it thou hast something to be Thankful for : O but then hath he not given thee one thing, which is better then all things, an Interest in his blessed Self, in his everlasting unchangeable Love, in his well-ordered, and sure Covenant ? Let such poor hearts break, in such cases that have lost their God : But, that Golden God is none of thy God, the God of Heaven is Witness with thy Conscience : O my Soul, is thy God safe ? Then fear not, cheer up, all's well still ; yea, and let come what will, it shall be so in spite of Sin, Earth and Hell, and that's more.

But again, as it is but part of my Nails that I am losing, so it is but that part which is loose : There is one part of the Nail which grows to the Flesh ; if I should but put the point of a Pin there, it would presently strike to my Heart, and much more if I should go about to tear, or cut it off ; but, this loose part I cut off, and it puts me to no pain or anguish at all : Just so, methinks, the case stands, in reference to our parting with the World, according as our hearts are glued to, or weaned from it ; The difference is almost as great, as between one Man's shaking off a loose hanging Coat, and anothers parting with his Skin : Hath the Lord done any thing for thee here, O my Soul, and, hast thou, at this pinch, in any measure, experienced the sweet advantage and comfort of it ? O be Thankful : Lord, give me the Grace, the Use, and Comfort of it, but take all the Glory to thy self ! But O perfect what thou hast begun !

Again,

Again, this thing I do my self; indeed if another did it, either one who had a mind to do me a mischief, or one that was heedless and careless I might be a little uneasy for fear he should cut too deep, least he should cut my Flesh instead of my Nails; But I do it my self, all the Eyes I have are engaged to oversee the business, the hand that Cutts gageth the Knife that so it may not cut where it should not, nor too deep where it doth, and so I have no manner of fear or trouble upon me: Why, O my Soul, thou and all thy concerns are in thy Heavenly Fathers hands, and that is better then if they were in thy own; He hath more Wisdom to dispose of them then thou hast, and he loves thee better then thou dost or ever can love either him or thy self: I, but the boisterous stormy Winds did it, which seem to regard no Law: No such matter; Its true they did it, but in the mean time thy Father had them in his fist; They did it, but not without his knowledge, not without his permission, yea, his active Providence. It may be this trouble will not come alone; Now whatever comes next remember this that thou art in thy heavenly Fathers hand, one that knows what he doth, one that loves thee entirely and will do thee no harm. But further, if I should cut any of them a little too near, or when at any time I do so, tho' it may put me to a little present pain, and trouble for a while after, yet I am not much concerned at it because I know they will soon grow again.

It may be, especially if further Losses and Crosses should come tumbling upon the back

of this, the Tempter will then be suggesting to thee (especially if once he get thee down, which God forbid) I say, it may be, he will then be suggesting to thee thus; Now the Lord is blasting thee in thy Estate; expect no other but that thou and thine shall come to want: But, if so, I warn and charge thee that thou listen not unto him, yeild not, fear not, be not discouraged, O my Soul, for thou shalt yet praise him for his loving kindness even here; Who tells thee that these Nails will grow again? Thou believest it by a Natural Faith (if I may so call it) But I can assure thee from my Bible that thou shalt not want any good thing, while there is a God in Heaven to supply thee, and while he hath any thing in Heaven or Earth to supply thee with; Fear not, only believe.

But one thing further, and so a close; Now I have cut my Nails I find my Fingers are more Neat and handsome, and more fit for service; That which I have lost here I find is to my gain and advantage: O my Soul, look after that I pray thee! The right holy exemplary bearing of this Affliction is one part of thy work, see carefully to that; Lay hold of this blessed Opportunity of honouring thy God, and crediting his good ways! Let the World see (if it will) that Religion is not meer talk, but that there is something more in it then they are aware of: But rest not here; a right exemplary fruitful improving of and under this Affliction is another part of thy work, O look to that too! Let this promote universal Mortification, wean thee more from the World, make thee every way more
holy

holy and Heavenly ; From this day forward see thou do more then others.

Meditation 2.

*Upon my young Childs impatient quarrelsome
crying out at its Cough.*

MEthinks it might be allowed to pass for one Argument to prove that sad truth that there is such a thing as Original Sin, *scilicet*, That any Man that hath eyes in his head, that is in his wits, that hath the use of his Reason should be able to overlook it, and much more that any should have the face to deny it : Should one set the Holy Scriptures aside in this matter, yet are there not other unwelcome Arguments enough daily offering themselves to our eyes and ears which do sufficiently attest it? Surely one may without breach of Charity censure such as Persons of very small acquaintance, not only with their Bibles, but also with themselves, or observation of others, who are so easy as to receive, so weak as to be imposed upon with such strange wild Doctrin as this, *scilicet*, That Children come into the World like a piece of clean white Paper upon which a Man may write what he pleaseth, that they learn the trade of Sin only by example, and much more have the impudence to be the Authors and Propogators of it ; I am sure I find no such Doctrin in my Bible, and methinks my little Boy here not much above Twelve Months old

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old doth plainly confute it ; Indeed it must be granted that bad examples are dreadfully mischievous here, and I must further acknowledge with shame and sorrow that I have fallen far short, been lamentably defective here, *scilicet*, in setting my Children so good a one as I ought ; but yet I can never believe that this Child could ever by this means have learnt so soon to be thus expert at its impatience and frowardness as I find it is ; No, no, this must come from something within, this must be a limb of the Old Man, the body of Sin it derived from us and brought into the World with it.

It hath pleased the Lord to visit my Child with Distempers, I have no reason to wonder at that, it is a Sinner ; I may rather wonder that one part of it is not in the Grave, and the other in Hell.

Amongst the rest it is afflicted with a sore Cough, and as oft as the Cough comes it falls a crying in a fretting impatient furious manner, and methinks Original Sin peeps out ; Indeed we must allow meer Nature, tho' Innocent, to complain in case it be grieved with Sicknes, Pain or the like ; Stoickal Principles put in Practice would, as it were, turn Men into Stocks and Stones. But its complaining in such a peevish fretful manner, as angry with its Cough, and as if it would be revenged upon it, this argues Old *Adam* is within.

But alas ! What doth the poor Child get by it ? no good at all, but much harm ; its crying hinders its rest, and must needs distemper its head the more, and promote its Feavorishness, and

and I plainly observe that it brings on its Coughing Fits the faster; Its Coughing sets it a Crying, and its Crying sets it a Coughing again; and thus its Mother and I are disquieted, and have one bad Night after another. Methinks just thus it is with us many times when under the Afflicting hand of God; our Sins bring Troubles and Afflictions upon us, and we manage them so, as thereby to set our Corruptions a working: O what a sad case Sin hath brought us into! What would become of us if the Lord was not Merciful unto us? How greatly sinful, how desperately foolish and cruel a thing is this for us, to fret and murmur, to be froward, impatient, and discontented in such cases? Hereby we much dishonour God, wound our own Consciences, break our Peace, make our Cross; whatever it is, much more heavy and galling then the Lord intended it; yea, thus we provoke him to lay on more to bring our Stomacks down: When did any ever harden himself against God and prosper? We can expect no good, but deadly mischief, by such a carriage and behaviour under God's Afflicting hand: The poor Bird, when taken in the Net, may much sooner Maim it self, by fluttering about, then by that means get at Liberty again. I remember I have somewhere met with a Story very applicable here, which was to this effect, A Company of the poor Blind Heathen were Invited to a great Feast, but when the day came, the Weather by no means favoured them, but proved extream foul and Rainy, so that they could not enjoy themselves to their Minds, and therefore in the heat of their Rage they took their

their Bowes to shoot at one of their fained Deities ; indeed I have forgotten his Name , but no matter for that ; this I remember, the Story says, Their Arrows came short of him their intended Mark, and fell down upon their heads, and wounded some of them Morally.

Why truly thus it is with us, by our Impatience and Discontent, we even let fly at the God of Heaven, but where the Execution is like to be, whether God or we are like to suffer by it, one may, without a Spirit of Prophecy, undertake before-hand to determine ; Thus we certainly wound our selves, but cannot hurt him at all ; yea, thus we not only injure, and disquiet our selves, but others too that are within hearing of us : O that I could but learn that good Lesson from my poor impatient Child, to be in subjection to the Father of Spirits, to ly down quietly under God's hand, when-ever his Rod is upon me!

Meditation 3. Introductory,

Upon the Coyn, the King's Calling it in.

IT hath seemed good unto the King, upon the Advice and Request of His Parliament, to issue forth his Proclamation for the Calling in the Coyn ; This great and difficult Affair hath mainly taken up the Thoughts of our Parliament for a considerable time, and the whole Nation rings of it : There is scarce any thing that doth more universally employ Mens Minds and Tongues then this : One shall
scarce

scarce come into any Company, where some Discourse about it is not presently started, What News about the Money Bill? How must we do to take Money? &c. A great deal of precious time thrown away in idle, impertinent, and altogether unprofitable Chat about it; and, I am afraid, by too many, in that which is more directly, and notoriously sinful, *scilicet*, in groundless and wicked reflections upon the King and Parliament about it: Is it not Wisdom, O my Soul, to be raising some Spiritual, Holy, and Profitable Meditations from it; and, as opportunity offers, to endeavour to divert, and draw up others Thoughts this way also? Lord, for a Head, a Heart, a Tongue to do it with! I am sure, as well as others, to be a Sufferer, a Loser, in this Affair, by bad Money in my Hands; but, if the Lord would enable me to manage this Duty aright, Might it not bring in that profit which would more then over-balance my loss, and be an occasion of others advantage too? Sure I am, was I but a right Spiritual Chymist, I might readily extract something which is more valuable then the purest Gold, even out of the meanest piece of Copper-Money I have; But, alas, the Lord knows, and sad Experience hath made me know it too, that I am very short, and defective in this blessed, delightful, and enriching Art; But shall I therefore sit down discouraged, and do nothing, because I cannot do that I would, or that which others can? By no means considering what the Holy Apostle saith, 2 Cor. 8. 12. For if there be first a willing Mind, it is accepted according

to that which a Man hath, and not according to that which he hath not; And also remembering, who it was that said, *Un'o every one that bath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from every one that bath not, shall be taken away even that which he bath*, Math. 25. 29. There are many things, methinks, which do kindly offer themselves to my Thoughts and Meditations here; O that I could as kindly entertain, as Wisely and Advantageously improve them! Amongst the rest, the great variety, and different quality of the Money now abroad among us, is not the last, or least promising.

Meditat. 4.

Upon the Notoriously Bad Money.

ONE part of our Money is notoriously bad, plain bare-fac'd Copper; This now is easily discerned, every one that hath but half an eye may see it: And now if I may make the different sorts and qualities of Money a Resemblance of divers sorts and tempers of Men, methinks then this should look very like the gross and openly Prophane: Here may the Holy *Psalmists* Fool, I mean the Heaven-daring Atheist, who saith, *There is no God*: he, who, because he cannot fathom, doth therefore disbelieve the Glorious Myſtery of the Sacred Trinity; and he that is for an Absolute God (if I may so speak, that dare think of him, without the Blessed Jesus, the Great
and

and only Mediator ; Here may the Foul-mouth'd Swearer, the Reeling Drunkard, the Filthy Adulterer ; here may the Prophane Sabbath-breaker, and he that dare Ridicule, Deride, and Scoff at Holiness, and God's Holy One ; here, I say, may these, and other their Companions, see their Lively Picture ; such are so farr from having the right Tower-stamp of Heaven upon them, that the Devils Image and Superscription visibly appears in their Foreheads to every Eye that is not Blind ; And O how many of these there are, filling almost every Corner of the World ? Yea, how many of them, in so peculiarly priviledged a spot of it, as this of *England* is ? *O that my head was waters, my eyes a fountain of tears* upon this account ! Should it not be so for the Lord's sake, who is so much dishonoured by them, and, for their own sakes, who, poor Wretches, are riding Post to Hell, and are at daily hard Labour to Damn themselves, and yet are scarce aware of it ; yea, and for poor *England's* sake, which groans under them ; and may, if Mercy prevent not, be sunk by them ?

But I observe now, Matters are coming to the Trial, tho' I have ordinarily little Money, comparatively, that comes to my Shop, but such as is Counterfeit, yet I see but little of this ; I suppose now persons are ashamed, or think it to no purpose to offer such bare-fac'd naughty Money as this, therefore throw it by : O methinks this gives me a view, doth fitly, and in a lively manner, represent to my Mind, these poor Prophane Wretches, hiding their heads at the Great Day. As bravely as they can swagger it out
now,

now, yet, methinks, I already see them skulking. O when the Blessed and Holy Jesus comes, whose eyes are as a Flame of Fire, when he comes to give to every one according as his Work shall be, *Rev. 22. 12.* I am sure it will be so: Whoever they are that will be for creeping into Dens, and under Rocks and Mountains at that Great and Terrible Day, if it might be thus to hide and cover themselves from his face, *Rev. 6. 15, 16.* to be sure these will be some of them; O that the poor hearts did but know it, would but seriously consider it now in time!

Meditat. 5.

Upon the Plated Money, or that which is Artificially Cover'd.

BESIDES that Money which is notoriously bad, there is another sort that is artificially cover'd; nothing better than a piece of Copper within, yet so dexterously cover'd with Silver on the out-side, that the generality of Persons are easily deceived with it, so as to esteem and take it for good; Yea, some of it is done with such great exactness, and is so near an Imitation of the King's Coyn, that such as converse much with Money, and whose knowledge and discerning in it is elevated above the common and ordinary size, by many degrees, yet may be, and frequently are, imposed on by it; yea, I do not think, that any one Man's Judgment is such (unless it be that
of

of some of the Wicked Artists themselves) as to enable him exactly to know and distinguish it all; And this now, tho it hath a better face then the former, yet its only a fairer Naught, and, in some respects, its more mischievous, as Persons are more liable to be deceived by it to their great prejudice: Methinks now, here the Painted Hypocrite is fairly brought in for his share; There is a Generation of them, such as are elevated many degrees above Prophaness, they are for Morality, and outward Civility; they will not be Drunk, Swear, and the like, as others do; they are Just and Honest in their Dealings, yea, they are forward and zealous for outward acts of Devotion, and some of them very excellent in them; can Pray, and Discourse of Religion at such a rate, as would make one admire; And so they pass for good Currant Christians; Yea, the most experienced and discerning Ministers and Christians, may be, and frequently are deceived in them: Indeed, as some of our bad Coyn is so bunglingly covered, or slightly washt over, that it is presently and easily discovered what it is; so some of those that may pretend high at first, yet, in a little time, one way or other, plainly discover themselves what they are; But others of them are every way so exact and demure, so far as the eye of Man can reach, that they pass for real, yea, and excellent Christians; But, all this while, there is a Core within, which the Lord, the maker of Hearts (but not the Author of Sin) and the searcher of them, hath his eye upon.

If one should now turn all they have into this sort of Counterfeit Coyn, it was enough
to

to spoil one in the close, tho' one should please themselves with foolish fancies for a while as being Rich and full of Money, and tho' others should think so too, seeing only the outward shew and bulk, but not understanding the true quality and intrinsic value thereof,

Why so these poor wretches, tho' they please themselves with their own deceivings for a while, conceiting they are Rich, and blessing themselves with the proud *Pharisee*, *Luke 18. 11.* That they are not as other Men, no Extortioners, Unjust, Adulterers or as this or that Profane Sinner; and tho' others, who can judge only by the outward appearance, may have good thoughts of them too, yet, alas, they are in as sure a road to Hell as the profaneſt wretch of them all; yea, in some respects, their case is more sad and dangerous, as they lye more out of the way, and have rendered themselves more incapable of converting Grace then the former: As experience teacheth that profane ones are more easily and frequently wrought upon then such as have hardened themselves in a way of studied Hypocrisy; and as their present case is thus more sad as to themselves, so its also more mischievous unto others, as they are more liable to be deceived and misled by them both in Judgment and Practice to their great prejudice, then if they were downright openly profane: And then, as to their condition in the other World, as Hell must be their lot for ever, so the great Judge of all hath beforehand let them know, *Matth. 24. 51.* That he will appoint other grievous Sinners their Portion with them in it, which plainly intimates

intimates that theirs will be none of the best. O ! no, the Hypocrites Portion of Wrath in Hell will be found a double Portion, or like *Benjamins* mess, five times as large as that of many other Sinners whom now they are ready to look upon with contempt, and bless themselves from as much worse and more miserable Men then they.

Meditation 6.

Upon the Course Money, or that which is mixt Mettal.

BESIDES that part of our Money which is barefaced-Copper, and that also which is more dexterously covered, there is another sort which we call mixt Mettal, or course Silver ; This now, tho' it be not so pure and good as it should be, yet doth much excell the former ; And now, in taking Money, the great difficulty lies in passing a right judgment upon this : That which is notoriously Brass or pure Silver there is ordinarily no great matter of difficulty in discerning, but this middle sort oft sets the best eyes and wits upon the tenters ; This is turned and turned again, and hardly passed by Persons of judgment and caution, at least without much questioning and doubting.

Methinks here now, O my Soul, I see my own face, and that of other poor weak ones like my self ; some Grace I hope there is, yea a predominancy (as indeed that is essential
to

to true Grace, I mean that it be habitually and most ordinarily so) But, alas, it is with so great a mixture of Sin and corruption as many times occasioneth great fears and doubtings in my Soul : The alloy is so great as clouds my evidences, and hinders my joy and rejoycing in the Lord ; Indeed its something, O my Soul, and a great one too, if thou canst appeal unto the Lord, and say with his Servant Job, [*Thou knowest that I am not wicked.*] But yet this mixt state is not quietly to be rested in, contentedly to be taken up with by no means, and especially not now the Lord hath thee in his furnace of Affliction ; No doubt he expects I should come out refined ; O that I may, even as Silver or Gold that is seven times purified ! Pray hard, and believe hard, O my Soul, that it may be so.

But here now is something for my encouragement ; Indeed its generally said that this sort of Money will not be taken in by the Government ; But here God's ways are not as Mans ways, but as high as the Heavens are above the Earth above them, and higher too. Tho' his poor servants are not in this life such pure good Mettal as the standard of the Law requires, no not the best of them, alas, much less then such as I, yet there now comes in the rich and glorious grace of the Gospel to our relief, relaxing the terms of the first Covenant, admitting of sincerity, or the fore-said predominancy instead of perfect sinless holiness and obedience : Blessed be God for such Grace ! Blessed be a dear Jesus the purchaser of it for us ! *By grace are we saved, Eph.*
2. 5.

well-meant, but
unsound divinity
in the letter of it.

Meditation 7.

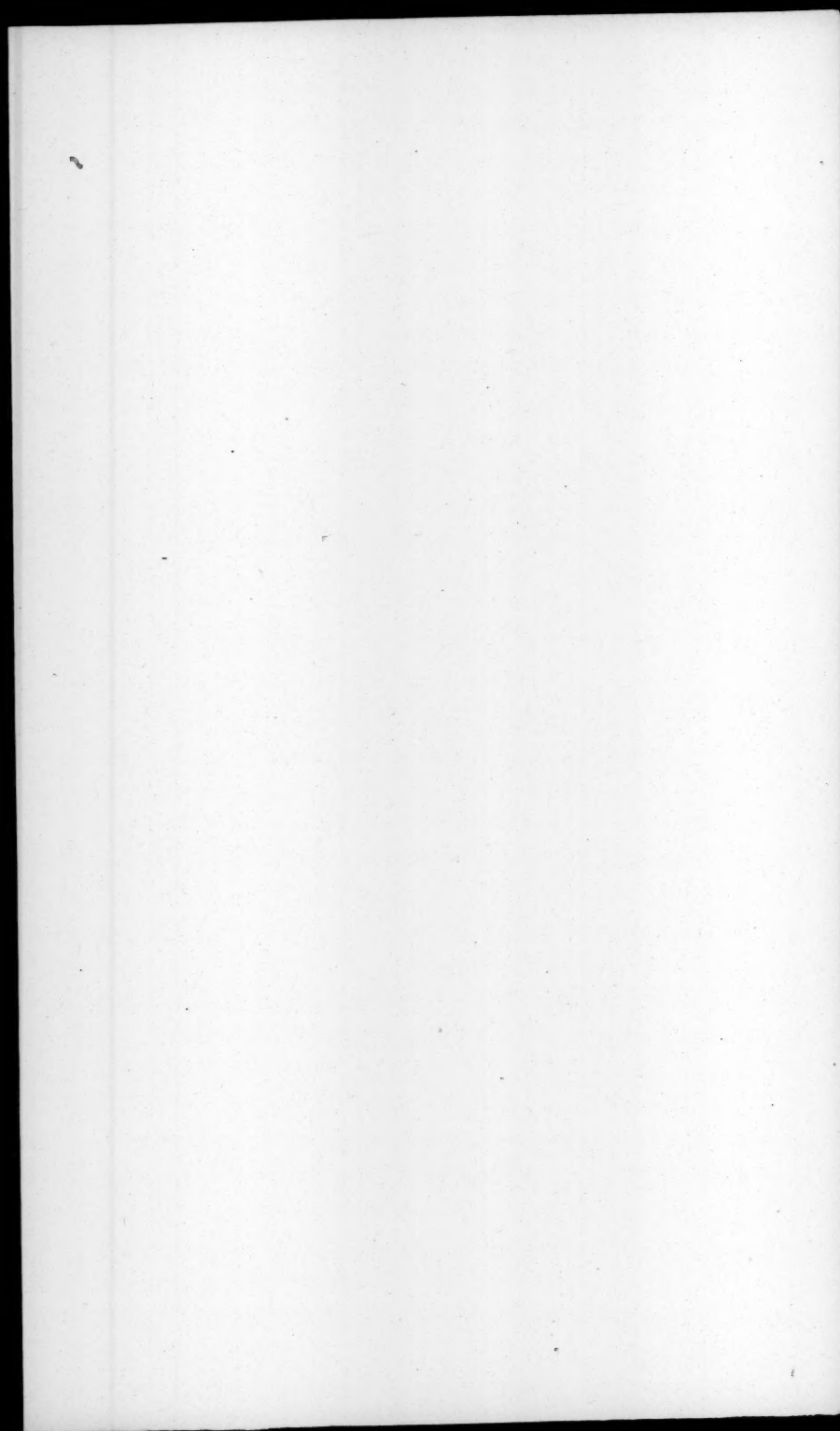
Upon the poor small Silver Money.

A very great part of our Money is very small; the Mettal good if brought to the Touchstone, but the value small if put into the ballance; This methinks I must apply unto my self, and look upon as an Emblem of my poor weak dwarfish graces; Precious they are indeed for what there's of them, but poor if compared with and weighed against others large broad ones: And yet, alas, how oft I suffer Satan the World and my own Corruptions to clip them still? Blessed be God if (tho' my clipt Money doth not grow bigger) yet I can at any time find my poor impaired graces recovering themselves; That's a sign they have life in them, as my Money hath not: But now this small Silver Money, the King lets us know he will take it in currantly into his Exchequer; good News, I thank him for it, and particularly as it fairly minds me how the blessed Proclamation of Heaven runs, *scilicet*, That true grace, though weak, shall not be rejected; *A bruised reed will be not break, the smoaking Flax will be not quench*, Isa. 42. 3. O my Soul, never forget it, how much thou art beholden unto a dear Jesus here! Thy poor weak graces (and imperfect sorrey services) had never past currantly in the Exchequer of Heaven, had not he been at the vast expence of his most precious Blood; Nay, thou hadst never had them had not he first thus

thus dearly purchased them, and then as freely bestowed them on thee.

Make a stand here, O my Soul, to behold, and admire, this great, this rare and lovely sight: O the vast immensity of this Heavenly Fund, and also of the Grace of the precious Founder! O the largeness of his Purse, in that he could, and of his Love, in that he would raise it, and that for such worthless unworthy ones as we! O methinks my poor thoughts would gladly dwell here, and take up their delightful rest; What is there that can savour or relish after this? O in Heaven they shall, and that for ever. But there is another thing which doth (though methinks unwelcomly) call them down, *scilicet*, Amongst this small Money of every Stamp, there are many Counterfeits, which, methinks, Preacheth to me such Doctrine as this, that there is no Grace, no, nor any degree of it, but (through the Subtilty of Satan, and the Cunningness of our Naughty Hearts) it hath its Counterfeits; And therefore, O my Soul, look about thee!

OF
THE
RECORDS
OF
THE
CITY
OF
BOSTON
FROM
1630
TO
1880
IN
FIVE
VOLUMES
VOLUME
FIVE
PART
ONE
1880
TO
1889



Meditation 8.

Upon the large broad Money.

A Nother patt of our Money is not only good Metall, but also large and unclipt; methinks now the sight of this presents to my Thoughts and Meditations a very lovely theatt, though, alas, such a one as shoots a great way over my own head; Methinks here now I see a lively Emblem, of not only a real, but also of a watchful steady grown and exemplary Christian, and that in the worst of times: As lovely an Object methinks as is to be seen on this side Jesus Christ and Heaven: As was said of Benajab one of Davids Worthies, 2 Sam. 23. 23. So methinks it may be said of such a one, *He is more commendable then the thirty, though he hath not yet attained to the first three*; such are elevated much above the ordinary rank of Christians; As its said of Saul, 1 Sam. 10. 23. *That he was bigger then any of the People from the Shoulders and upwards*; so these have quite overgrown the rest of their Brethren, though not yet come to their full Stature: They are more refin'd and purged from the drossy impure alloy of Sin and Corruption, but yet not so pure as they should be, and as they shall be when once they get to Heaven; And even those are not yet got quite out of danger of having their Graces impaired both from Corruption within and Temptation from with-

out, that they have still constant need of and work for Faith, Prayer and Watchfulness, and above all of God's Power to keep them: as this large Money is not yet out of danger of suffering damage as it falls into Wicked Clippers hands. But I observe amongst all our Money there is the least of this, but here and there a piece; Indeed I can sometimes hear People say the greatest part of our Money is Counterfeit and bad; I wish it be not so; But I make no doubt of this, that dividing the World, and setting the Wicked the gross and openly Profane and the close Hypocrite on the one hand, and the truly Godly on the other, I doubt not but the former will be found to carry it quite for Number; methinks I see the latter with the *Israelites*, 1 Kings 20. 27. appearing like two little Flocks of Kid, while the former with the *Afyrians* e'en fill the Country; One poor *Elijah* to Four Hundred and Fifty Prophets of *Baal*, 1 Kings 18. 19. But come to the Godly themselves, and, alas, how few substantial steady grown and exemplary Christians amongst them, especially in this declining degenerate age! Blessed be God some such there are left still, the good Lord add to the Number of them (how few or how many soever they be) an hundred fold, and let my Eyes be blest with seeing it, yea, and let me be one of the Blessed number too!

Again, amongst our good Large Money, I can see the fewest Crowns and Half Crowns; Its almost grown next to a Miracle, to see a Large

Large Crown Piece, or a Large Half Crown :
 Methinks this fairly directs my Thoughts to
 that Scripture which hath such an awful ter-
 rible Aspect on the Great Men of the Earth,
 1 Cor. 1. 26. *For ye see your Calling, Brethren,*
how that not many wise men after the Flesh,
not many mighty, not many noble are called :
 Its a very rare thing to see Great men good,
 especially to see any of them exemplarily so
 in bad Times, for usually a little Goodness
 goes a great way, even with the better
 sort of them, and especially
 then : (a) " Indeed, Great- (a) Dr. Spur-
 "ness and Goodness are then stow, *de prom.*
 "most refulgent (as one well
 "observes) when they meet in the same
 "Subject, and joyned by Natural Couples
 "and Connections; But such a Conjunction
 "(as he farther) as its Glorious, so Rare;
 "seldom found either in Persons or things :
 "In Persons they are so dislocated, as if they
 "were of Lineage distinct, and had little
 "or no Affinity. O that the Great Ones
 of our Age would Practically Confute
 him.

One thing further here; Though I do
 believe indeed, that Comparatively there is
 but little of this Large Broad Good Money
 left, yet truly, one thing that makes us
 think that there is less of it than indeed
 there is, is this, its kept up by those that
 have it; some, it may be, scarce see a Broad-
 Piece once in a Moon (as we use to say)
 Their Cry is, all our Broad Money is gone

out of *England*; when, it may be, there are many Gentlemen, and others, that have Ten, Twenty, Fifty, and One Hundred pounds of it by them: Why so truly, the Lord hath a many Precious Servants that we know not of; We may be ready sometimes to think the number of them less then indeed it is: We find the Holy Prophet *Elijah* under this mistake, *1 King. 19.* The good *Man* thought, he had been left alone, but the Lord lets him know, that he was out, telling him there, *That he had still left him Seven Thousand Men in Israel, whose knees had not bowed unto Baal, and whose mouthes had not kissed him:* And there are doubtless, in our days, too many Choice Excellent Christians, who, in this Sense, are the Lord's hidden Ones, hid in Corners, hid under a Cloud of Obscurity and Reproach it may be; Hid from the Eyes of the World, and known to few of their Brethren, but not hid from his Eyes whose they were, to whom they do peculiarly belong. My Broad-Money is not exposed to every ones view, but I know where it lies my self.

Meditat. 9.

Meditation 9.

*Upon some Persons refusing Good Money,
calling all Bad.*

THere are many, who, because there is so much bad Money abroad, therefore refuse even that which is good, especially among those who have the least judgment; Their cry is, its all alike, all bad, we have no good Money left in *England*: This is one great mischief attending this affair, arising partly from Persons Ignorance, and partly from their disaffection to the present Government, upon the account of the great Expense which the holy and allwise Providence of God efficiently, our own sins meritoriously, hath made necessary for its support; Because they know not that which is good, therefore they call all bad; And because, for carrying on the War, a great deal hath necessarily been sent out of the Nation, they cry, all our good Money is gone into *Flanders*; what we have left is all of a sort, all bad; If you will not take such, you must take none; Such Persons are very blame-worthy; and, by this fault of theirs, they mind me of a greater, which, I wish, was not as common in the World, and, of which, truly they are, some of them, as likely to be guilty as most I know, *scilicet*, Because there are some rotten false-hearted Hypocrites among the Godly, therefore all are condemn'd as such: As soon as they espy such a one, This is one of your Professors they cry, they are

all alike I warrant you, all Knaves, the whole Pack of them ; But, alas, they are blind and ignorant ; The World doth not know us : No wonder, it did not know our Lord and *Master* when he was in it ; But the main Reason is, they hate God and Godliness, and us for it : But, thou Fool, because there is Tin, Peuter, Copper, Is there therefore no such thing as Silver, or Gold in the World ? Or, because thou here and there seest the shape and Picture of a *Man*, drawn with Paint, or cut in Stone, Is there therefore not one living *Man* upon Earth ? Hath thy hatred to Religion prevail'd so far, as to put out thine Eyes, and to extinguish thy Reason ? How wilt thou be able to Answer it, when the Lord comes to make up his Jewels, and so to be eternally Glorified in them ? Where will then be that mouth of thine, with which thou hast not feared to Condemn the whole Generation of his Righteous Ones ? In the mean time know this, That as Wisdom is Justified of her Children, so we fear not her failing, sooner or later, to justify them too.

Meditation 10.

Upon Mens Criticalness in taking MONEY.

EVery Body now is very Cautious in taking Money, extream Critical about it; Truly one cannot blame them, there is good Reason why they should be so: And, are there not the same Reasons, but with much additional strength, why I should be as cautious, exact and critical about my Soul concerns? Let search be made; so,

First, There is much Counterfeit Coyn abroad, and so great danger of their being deceived, this makes them cautious; Doth not this hold good in refference to my Soul? Are there not many false Doctrins abroad? And doth not that require and will it not justify my being very cautious and wary what I receive for Truth? Is there not here a good reason why I should be daily searching the Scriptures to see whether such and such things be so or no? Again, are there not as many Counterfeit Graces as there are true ones? Is there not danger of my being deceived with them? And therefore should I not be frequent and serious in the close examination of them, to see at least that they be good Mettal in an Evangelical sense, and that they have the true Tower Stamp upon them? Again, are there not many bad ex-

Occasional Meditations.

amples in the World? Should I not therefore be very careful before I imitate and follow the example of any to see that therein they be followers of Christ?

Secondly, As there is much Counterfeit Money abroad, and as so they are in danger of taking it, so likewise their damage is like to be great in case they do; And doth not this reason also stand good here? Yea, is not my Souls damage like to be much greater? Suppose a Man should take bad Money and loose it; with a little care and labour and God's Blessing upon it he may get more: But if I should take Error for Truth, especially such as in Holy Writ are marked as damnable Doctrins; if I should be mistaken in my Graces, taking Counterfeit for true, Presumption for Faith, or the like; Or if, instead of following the good, I should follow the bad examples of others, and so live and dye in any Sin unrepented of and unpardon'd, I should thus loose my Soul for ever, which is of infinitely more worth then all the Treasures in both *Indies*, the loss of which the whole World could not repair.

Meditation III.

Upon Persons running about to ask others judgment of the Money they take.

EVEN this Circumstance doth frequently occasion me trouble, and therefore in point of Justice and Equity it oweth me something in way of recompence, and methinks it is as ready to pay it: If People did but as much value, and were but as much concerned about their Souls as they are now about their Money, then their question, *Acts* 2. 37. Or his, *Acts* 16. 30. would be more in their mouths; Then Bibles and practical good Books would be in more request with them, more valued and studied by them; Then Ministers Chambers would be more frequented by them for the resolution of Soul doubts and practical cases.

Indeed, one cannot blame People for this, though they sometimes trouble one; This is not a time for Persons that have but little Judgment to trust it in taking *Money*, nor to believe every one that saith, his *Money* is good when he offers it; Though truly, I think, its justly to be suspected, and carefully to be avoided as a piece of Injustice, especially at such a time as this, to offer, much more to impose, any thing that is evidently bad, especially on such as one knows to be Ignorant; But its too plain the most make no bones of it: Why so truly as to our Souls its not safe

safe leaning to our own understanding, or believing every Spirit, much less the Wicked One, who is a Liar from the beginning, and the Father of it: It must needs be our Wisdom, as to bring every thing, both matters of Faith and Practice, to the Divine Standard in the Holy Scriptures; so likewise in more doubtful, difficult, and weighty Cases, to take Advice of God's Ministers, and others, but always, and above all, of God himself. But I have often thought, how much it concerns People to look about them well, whose Advice they seek, and trust to, to see that he be skilful in *Money*, and also faithful unto them; If he have not both those qualifications, they are but where they was; nay, alas, in a worse Box, as they are in more danger of being deceived, for they would be likely to make a better use of their own Eyes, and of the little Judgment that they have, if they did not trust to his. Just thus, methinks, the case stands, as to our Souls; we had need be very careful whose Advice we seek, and follow, in our Soul Affairs, to see that he be one, both Able, Experienc'd and Faithful, least he play us a Mountebanks Trick; And so much the more careful ought we to be here, as our Souls are of infinitely more worth then our Cash.

Meditation 12.

*Upon Persons changing their Half Crowns
for small Money.*

THE Half Crowns being called in first, every one is careful to get them off; as I have had occasion to go to Mr. T. this Week, I have found him very buisy in changing them, giving smaller *Money* for them; And, upon getting them changed, I see the Country-men going away very chearfully; proud they are of it, and think themselves safe enough, its like, though, its very probable, some of them get bad Shillings and Sixpences in the room of them.

Methinks now this fairly brings to my Thoughts the miserable, sad, deluded Case, and Soul-undoing course of many poor Sinners, that leave one Lust, but its only in way of exchange for another; It may be under the Word, or under some heavy Cross their sleepy Consciences are awakened, and tells them, That such and such a course will certainly ruin them; suppose Prodigality, a Riotous, Voluptuous way of Living, whereupon they are forced to leave that, but, alas, its only to fall in with the contrary sinful, extreame, sordid Covetousness: It may be they are convinced that open, gross Prophaness persisted in, will inevitably Damn them, whereupon they leave it; but, alas, its only to take up a Formal, Hypocritical Profession of Religion; And yet, in this, they bless themselves, and think they
are

are now as good Christians as they need to be, and as safe and happy as the best: But, alas, poor Souls, they are e'en but where they was still for all this: Conversion, Regeneration, Repentance unto Life is another thing; All Sin, as hateful, and not only, or chiefly as dangerous and hurtful to the Soul, must be forsaken, not one Hoofe left behind, and yet this is but one half of it neither.

Meditation 13.

Upon mens unwillingness to take Money and eagerness to rid their hands of what they have.

ONE hint more and so a stop to this range of Thoughts for the present; and methinks one may be allowed to make a little stand to wonder at this; certainly if a Person should come amongst us who knew not the reason of it, he would be ready to look upon us as Persons extreamly mortified unto the World, and such as might with much ease be brought to the Temper of those Primitive Christians who sold their Possessions, and brought the Money and laid it down at the Apostles feet: Truly a while since it would very hardly have entered into my Thoughts that this beloved and so much adored Mettal should ever have been so treated in *England* as now it is; but a few Months since the great outcry was, they will soon have all! We have no Money almost left in the Nation!

tion ! Then the enquiry was, How do you do to get in Money ? But behold the Tables are turned ; now every body almost hath too much, and their greatest care is to pay it of as fast as they can : Now the enquiry is, Will you take any Money ? Or, pray how do you do to get off your Money ? And he is by many looked upon as the safest happiest Man that hath his hands the clearest of it : O how fickle how changeable are we, and all our Enjoyments here !

THE

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CHAP. VII.

C H A P. VII.

Containing the Workings of his Soul upon a Fit of Sickness he had, and God's gracious recovering him out of it. And his Remarks upon his Father's Imprisonment.

Some Remarks upon a Fatherly Chastisement.

January 25, &c. 1687.

IT pleased the Lord (who hath the most full and absolute Right and Propriety in me) at this time so to dispose of me in his most wise and gracious Providence, that I was brought very low by a Fever, even to the Gates of Death, and yet from thence he said, Return: I would not pass by this his Dispensation without making some Remarks upon it, and upon due Observation, I must acknowledge this Path of his towards me hath been Mercy and Truth; this Affliction notwithstanding, yet God is good, for in very Faithfulness hath he afflicted me; I verily believe his design in sending this Affliction was very gracious; to fetch home a prodigal Child, to reduce a straying Servant. And I have found by sweet Experience, that he hath been wonderfully good to me under it; and I would further hope in his Mercy, that he will do me good by it, that I shall reap the benefit of it, although this much desired Mercy doth too too little appear at present.

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At the first I was exercised with violent Pains, my Strength to bear Affliction is small, Patience soon tired out; but the Lord enabled me in some measure quietly to bear those Pains; and when my Strength was gone (as a wise and merciful Physician, who would not over-dose his Patients) he then took away my Pains.

The Lord dealt very favourably with me, considering what my Sins deserve, as indeed he always doth: He saw I was able to bear but little, and so laid on very gently; methinks he did but shake his Rod over me! O that his Tenderness towards me, his gentle Dealings with me, may work kindly upon me!

I cannot but look upon it as a great Mercy, that notwithstanding the violent Pains which I had for some time in my Head, and long Watchings, getting little or no Rest Night or Day, yet I was all the time very sensible: Thus I was in a Capacity for Consideration, the great Duty of an adverse, afflicted Estate: But alas! the Barrenness of my Heart as to good Thoughts. The Lord forgive it to me.

The Lord hath dealt very bountifully with me in the time of my Trouble, affording me many outward Mercies and Comforts to sweeten a bitter Cup to me: Methinks he hath dealt with me, as a tender-hearted loving Mother doth with a poor weak sickly Child: She is ready to give it all the good things she can think of: So have I been indulged; indeed I cannot say that I have wanted any thing at this time, but a more quiet, contented, thankful Heart: And what a pitty, what a shame it is, that this should have been wanting.

I endeavour to bring up my Mind to a cheerful Compliance with my heavenly Father's Will, in this his Dispensation, but I have much ado with an untoward rebellious Heart : yet I think I have not allowed of, or entertained one Thought of direct Impatience or Discontent, since I have been under this Affliction, though now I come far short of that Child-like Submission and entire Self-resignation, which is my Duty. Lord, thou knowest my Frame! Consider my Weakness, and pity and spare me according to the Greatness of thy Mercy! I have great Cause to be humble when I think what a dull Soul I have, my Heart even dead within me, lying like a Stone or Log in my Breast, the little Grace I have very unactive, my Affections low and flagging, the Motions of my Soul Heavenward (when they should have been most frequent, lively and vigorous) very few, and those I had poor and languid ones; I think I am always worst, when I should be best. I am ashamed to think that when the Lord hath been and is so wonderfully good to me, I am no better in my Carriage towards him. Yet, Lord, thou knowest its not pleasing to me to have it so: but that on the contrary, I am glad when I can find a little warmth. I found my Father's Prayers very cordial, they would sometimes put a little Life into my poor dead Soul.

I endeavour to keep up good Thoughts of God; I would not think hardly of God, though he shew me never such hard things; That [*I go to my Father, and your Father—*] hath been very sweet and reviving to me; I can call him Father still, and go to him as my Father, and I delight to do so: Methinks my dear God seems

resolved on the Salvation of this poor Soul of mine! Sometimes he is heaping Favours upon me, loading me with his Benefits: At other times when he seeth there is need, he shaketh his Rod over me: One while he is plying me with Cordials, another while with Corrosives; *My Soul shall not die but live.* I take this Affliction as a Token of his Love, and find I do not love him less but more for it.

It is a great Act of Grace and Favour, that the Lord will take me under his Discipline, that he will be at the pains to afflict such a Wretch as I; though my way hath been so froward and strange, yet he hath not quite given me over. Lord, what is Man that thou shouldst magnify him? And that thou should set thine Heart upon him? And that thou should visit him every Morning, and try him every Moment?

Let the Lord do what he will with me, I would love and cleave to him still; Afflictions shall not make me run away from him, but drive me nearer to him. Lord, whither or to whom else should I go? For my part, I know no God but thee; Though he kill me, *yet will I put my Trust in him.*

When I came to be a little apprehensive of my Danger, the Thoughts of Death and of the other World were a little strange to me; I think I was not heartily willing to die, at which I was much concerned, Lord, that I should be no more weary of this vain and sinful World, and of this Body of Sin and Death! Was I afraid of being happy too soon? Ah, poor weak languishing Faith! I perceive there is much Deceit in this Heart of mine: Sometimes I pretend much Love, and seem to be desirous of Death, and to thirst
and

and breath after Heaven, as if I could never be easy and well till I got thither: but when Death seems to come in good earnest, then I am for shifting it off a while longer: Yet (if I can know this Heart of mine) I think it was not any worldly Considerations that caused this Shiness and Unwillingness, but that I could freely have left this World, had I but been so clear for another World as I desired to be, had I but enjoyed such sweet Manifestations of God's Love as sometimes I have done: And I hope, the Lord will turn this also to my Advantage, making it a means to quicken me to take more pains in the Work of Self-examination, and to make me more careful to walk more closely with him, and more evenly before him for time to come.

I desire the Lord would remove this Affliction, but here I am fearful of offending: I endeavour to say heartily [*Thy Will be done*] And I think 'tis not only or chiefly that I may be eased of Pain and Weakness that I desire this, but that I may be in a better Capacity of serving God (though alas 'tis but little that I can do for him, when I am at best). I would not live any longer in the World than I may be some way serviceable to him; yet I would not carve for my self here; I had rather lie under the Affliction still, than cast it off my self (was it in my Power) till the Lord please to remove it for me; God's time is the best, and blessed are all they that wait for him: And I desire as well that the Lord would sanctify this Affliction to me, and here I can pray more heartily, because I know it's according to his Will; I dread to think of its leaving me as it found me, and going away without its Errand: Therefore I daily wrestle

with him in Prayer, and send up many Cries with Tears; Lord, do me good by it! Teach me to Profit! Let thy Rod do its work upon me! To Correction and Instruction! Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me! I would be Learning something both from the Affliction, and from thy Mercy in restoring me thus far: Let thy good Spirit be my Instructor, for none teach like Thee!

Give Ear O Lord, attend unto my Cry; tho' thou seem at present to take no Notice, I would hold on still; I will Pray, and look up; I will follow Thee with continued importunity; thou wilt hear me!

1. I desire to be more thoroughly Convinced of the evil and bitterness of Sin; Sin, it is Gods great Enemy, therefore cannot be the Creatures Friend; it is a just and righteous thing, that God should set himself against such ungrateful Creatures as Sinners are: Affliction riseth not out of the Dust, neither doth Trouble rise out of the Ground; they are some of the bitter Fruits of Sin; Fools because of their Transgressions, and because of their Iniquities are afflicted: It is Sin that brings me into the Briars of Affliction, and shall not this now make my Stomack rise against it, and promote a Work of Mortification? Is Sin pleasant and sweet? And what is sickness and pain, are they so too? And will Hell be so? *Why the Wages of Sin is Death?* O my Soul! Humble thy self under God's Hand; take shame to thy Self, lay Sin to Heart; if thou lovest God, and if thou lovest thy self, hate all Sin with a perfect hatred, and heartily forsake it; What is there in Sin that thou should be so fond of it, and that since thou findest it so
much

much to thy cost? Take special notice of that particular Distemper of Soul the Lord seems to point at, and lay a load of Sorrow upon it, and Watch and Pray and strive against it; *Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee!*

2. Of the Emptiness and Vanity of the Creature; all things here below are Vanity, mere Cyphers, very insignificant things; they are very fading and uncertain: Whatsoever worldly Comfort and Enjoyments I have, they may soon be taken away from me, or I may soon leave them: And alas! What can they do for me in the Time of my Distress? I find they are e'en poor Comforters, except the Lord help, they cannot help; endeavour now to get a right estimate of the World, and all worldly things; How Light they are, if put into the Ballance? Improve this Advantage the Lord hath put into thy Hands to get above the World, for its ill fighting a Cock upon his own Muck-hill; set not thy Heart any more upon things that are not, leave others to fight and make a bustle about these earthly Vanities (the Pleasures, Honours and Riches of this World) who have no greater things to mind; shouldst not thou think it below Thee, so to busie thy self about things so base, low and fordid? Let thy Pleasure be to please and enjoy God; the Honour thou aspirest after to be one of the Children of God, and more and more like thy heavenly Father; chuse the better part, make sure of a part in the Promises, that thou be one whose is the Kingdom of Heaven, for whom a Mansion there is prepared; *Lay up Treasures in Heaven; The Lord is my Portion*, saith my Soul; *therefore will I hope in him.*

3. Of my own frailty and mortality ; What is my Life but as a Vapour, which appeareth for a little Time, and soon vanisheth away ; Humane Nature, even when in its Strength and Vigour, lieth open to so many Crosses and Disturbances, that (as Mr. B. well) my Life is but like a Candle in a broken Lanthorn, which every blast of Wind is ready to puff out ; do I believe that I am a poor frail Mortal, or do I not ? If I do not, what shall I then make of those many plain Assertions which God that cannot lie hath given me in his Word ? And what say I to daily Experience, as to others of the same Nature with my self ? How many Bells have rung since I was committed Prisoner to this Room ? If I do believe it, how comes it to pass that thou livest at the rate thou ordinarily dost ? Ah ! these loose ineffectual Notions, about certain great and weighty Truths, that rest in the Brain, and influence not the Heart and Life ! O this practical Atheism ! Well, see thy Sin and Folly now in Time ; live no longer at such a distance from Death and the Grave, and from Eternity in thy Thoughts, be no longer such a stranger to them, make speedy Preparation ; endeavour to be at an Hours warning, make clear Work for another World, that so when Death comes indeed, thou maist not be daunted or dismay'd at it, but be able to welcome it with Joy ; get into such a State, into such a frame and posture without delay, as that thou maist be able upon good grounds to look upon it as a Conquered, and to Triumph over it ; saying, *O Death where is thy Sting ? O Grave where is thy Victory ?*

4. Of the worth of Health and Strength, and that especially as they better Capacitate me for the
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the Service of God; it is rare, that I am duly sensible of the worth of any Mercy, till I come to feel the want of it, and it's well if that do the Work; I have heard Time after Time, what a great Advantage I had in my young and healthful Days, to be doing for God and my Soul, and that I might never expect the like again; Now or Never, hath sounded oft in my Ears: But the Word wrought little upon me, therefore the Lord hath now been taking another Course, and hath sent another Preacher to me; because I would not hear, the Lord hath made me feel; and if this do not do, I may expect more still; now shall I not hear the Rod? It hath a Voice in it, and being in a great measure removed, it yet speaketh: Now if the Lord please to restore me to former Health, and put me upon a new Trial, shall I not prize the Mercy more, and endeavour to improve it more to his Glory? Shall I not live more to him, who is the God of my Life, and the God of all my Mercies?

This from the Affliction.

Now from the Mercy in my Restoration thus far, I desire to get my Heart affected,

1. With the Power and Goodness of God, He can cast down, and raise up; kill, and make alive; He hath all Distempers at his beck, at his Command they come and go: If he say but the Word, its enough to make one every whit whole; He rebuked the Fever, and it left me; the Case is never desperate, where he will undertake the Cure: Unto the Lord belongeth Power, also unto him belongeth Mercy; He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the Children

dren of Men, much less his own Children; and when he doth afflict them it is in Judgment, *Jer.* 10. 24. His Infinite goodness doth ever order and limit their Afflictions, both as to Time, Measure and Continuance; this I have had Experience of: I cannot in my sober Judgment but approve of this Affliction as good in every Circumstance of it, as coming from him who doth all things well: And while his Hand was laid upon me, I felt a supporting Arm put underneath, else had I fainted and perished in my Affliction; and in Wrath remembered Mercy: *Sorrow endured for a Night, but Joy came in the Morning; He considered my Frame, remembered that I was but Dust.* Oh, let me love him, and fear him, trust in him, and depend upon him at all Times, even for ever!

2.^o With the prevailing Efficacy of importunate Prayer with God; He stiles himself, *a God hearing Prayer*, and hath said much to encourage it; many wonderful Things have been wrought by it, some that have fallen under my small Observation, and many more that have been brought to notice by others; Prayer Honours God, and he delights to Honour Prayer: It's said, *The Prayer of Faith shall save the Sick*, and I am verily perswaded it hath been a means of saving my Life several Times; when I have had e'en, as 'twere, one Foot in the Grave, Prayer hath fetched me back again; and as for this Mercy in particular, I would look upon it as a Fruit and Answer of Prayer: For this many Cries were sent up to God, and he heard in Heaven, and sent me help right Early; O therefore let me prize and improve a praying Privilege more then ever I have done! Let me learn

learn to make more use of the Lord Jesus Christ as my Intercessor at Gods Right Hand; He is never weary, but still delights to be employed: Let me study to find out the Divine Art that is in Prayer: Could I but even Pray aright, I might have even what I would, *For if we ask any thing according to his Will, he heareth us*; Lord, *Teach me to Pray*! And because thou hast heard my Prayer, therefore will I call upon Thee so long as I have a being.

3. With the many strong Obligations the Lord hath laid upon me, to bind me fast and close to himself for ever; He gave me my being at first, and hath hitherto held my Soul in Life. I have ever been the Charge of his good Providence; *Goodness and Mercy he hath caused to follow me all my Days*; what could the Lord have done more for me, that he hath not done. I cannot say, that I have wanted any good thing: As a Man soweth, so he expects to reap, and where God doth much for any, he looks for answerable returns! Let me now reflect on the late Dispensation, and look upon the Affliction it self: The Lord affords me not only Food, but Physick too, when he sees its needful; Afflictions are good Physick, when a means of carrying off those bad Humors the Heart is naturally so full of, and so of making the Inner Man more healthful, strong and vigorous: Let me further think of Gods Mercy in restoring me; and what hath he done here for ever to engage me to love and serve him! He hath, as it were given me a new Life, and should I not now walk in newness of Life? O that I may now Love him more, and lay out my self more in his Service, and what I do for him, do it better!

better! Suppose a Man instrumental in saving my Life when it was in apparent Danger; should I not look upon my self as engaged to that Man while I live? What then are my Obligations unto God? Any little Favour from God I should esteem as great, because he is infinitely above me, and because all his Favours are Free, being no way engaged to me or any of his Creatures, further than he hath voluntarily engaged himself; and further I should think of the Obligations which I have freely taken upon my self: I was ready, even at this Time, to make fair Promises of new Obedience, if the Lord would please to restore me; The Lord now help me to live up to such Engagements!

4. Particularly, with the Obligations that lie upon me to the great Duty of Thanksgiving; Praise is a Tribute which God exacts from all his Creatures according to their various Capacities, and the Benefits bestowed upon them, and a very just and reasonable thing it is he should do so; for my part, I must acknowledge it to my shame, that though I owe more here than I shall be ever able to pay to all Eternity, yet I have been and still am a great stranger to this Duty (at least in the Life and Soul of it) which is indeed both sad and strange; Divine Praise is the Work and Wages of Heaven, which (as Mr. *Oldfield* well Notes) is a sufficient Demonstration of its Excellency and Delightfulness: Yea, I my self have sometimes tasted of the sweet Delight and Pleasure that is in it, and yet I ordinarily either neglect or am negligent in it: But now methinks the Time past should suffice, and more than suffice me, wherein I have denied God of his Due, and my self

self of so great Happiness and Felicity, and that now I should grow more dutiful unto him, and wise for my self; rob God of his Right no more, live no longer upon husks when Heavenly Manna may be had: Let me now accustom my self more to this heavenly Exercise; I am ready, and that very justly, to think them Happy, who are got to be Masters of this Divine Act, Saints and Angels in Heaven, and if ever I would be so, I must be a Learner and Practitioner of it here; the Lord is daily administring abundant Matter and Occasion, O that my Heart was but in Tune for it! Well, in short, let me bless God for all his Mercies; yea, and for Afflictions too, and for this in Particular; let me henceforth learn (according to Gods Will) *In every thing to give Thanks*, and endeavour and Pray that the Will of God in this Matter may as far as possible be done, by me here on Earth, even as it is done in Heaven, and let the many defects, sinful defects which do and will cleave to me in this and all other Holy Duties while I remain in this imperfect Estate make me long more to be there. *Amen.*

Apoc. 22. 21. Even so, come Lord Jesus, come quickly! Amen.

His Remarks on his Father's Imprisonment.

THE providential Dispensations of the great God deserve my most heedful Observati-
on; how sinful and dangerous a Course it is,
bewraying great Stupidity and Folly, yea despe-
rate

rate Madneſs for the Creature ſlightly to regard, much more to take no notice of, the Operation of his Hands, who is the great Creator, Rector and Judg. But what a holy and happy Life might I lead, did I but take due notice of, and rightly (tho I cannot here fully and perfectly) underſtand God's Dealings with me, and order my Carriage ſutable thereunto? And to this end I think it my Duty to endeavour to let no Providence out-ſlip me, either perſonal, relative or publick, without taking due notice of it, and endeavouring to improve it; eſpecially thoſe that are more remarkable. And indeed there is ſo much of God, not only of his Hand but of his Heart too, of his Goodneſs, hath appeared in a late Diſpenſation of his, my Father's Confinement, that I cannot but think it well worth my noting; and methinks it is a pity I ſhould truſt my weak (ſay I ſo) nay wicked, corrupt and deceitful Memory with it, which hath ſo often proved falſe to me, without taking ſome account of it in writing.

Nottingham, June 29, 1684.

The all-wiſe and gracious Providence of God ordered it ſo, that my Father came to this Town, and about Three of the Clock in the Afternoon of the Day following, being the Lord's Day, a conſiderable number of Men, Officers and others, ſuſpecting his being in Town, made diligent ſearch for him, and took him in the Houſe of Miſtreſs *Wigley*, where he lodged: When they came to the Room where he was, the Door being locked, he opened it, chearfully reſigning up himſelf unto them; and immediately after
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the publick Service was ended, he was examined, and though he had a good Plea, his intending a Journey to a Doctor at *Leicester* on Monday, to consult about his Health, *Dr. H.* which I think according to the very Letter of the Act upon which they did insist, would have been sufficient for his Release. Yet *The Five Mile Act.* Mr. *H.* then Mayor, was pleased that

Night to commit him to Prison. Here I shall omit the mention of that Christian Courage and Chearfulness wherewith the Lord was pleased to bear him up under his Trial; and the unexpected Support that some others of my Relations had: But I shall take most notice of those things which most nearly concern my self. That Sabbath-Providence sent me home, that in my Father's Absence I might be some-way helpful to the Family, according to my poor Ability, which I look upon as, no small Circumstance, wherein the Goodness of God appeared: for there repeating a Sermon, as my usual wont was, never thinking a Sabbath so well and comfortably spent as when I had some Opportunities, (within the compass of my Calling) of doing as well as getting good; and herein the Lord was pleased to direct me to such a Sermon, a great part whereof did particularly tend to prepare the Heart for Sufferings. And further, the Meditation of my Heart in Prayer was much enlarged this way; which did much prepare me for the News I soon after heard: for between 9 and 10 of the Clock that Night, News was brought to us that my Father was taken. At which I was not much discomposed, though my dear Affections to my Father, especially considering his Weakness, so that his Confinement, if long, was likely to en-

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danger his Health, so consequently his Life. Upon this account I could not, neither did I desire to be wholly unaffected; but I met with great Supports, that I was enabled after a little breathing space, not only to be patient, but joyful in this Tribulation, thinking it my Duty and Wisdom both to think well of, and acquiesce in all God's wise and gracious Disposals: As I remember the first Words I spake to him, that calling me to a-side, told me, what the sad Tidings was; Come, all is well done that God doth, which was so far as I can judge the very Language of my Heart in the predominant degree. Then I begun to think on what I had been repeating to others, formerly received from the Mouth of a faithful *Scotch* Minister, as also on what I had been immediately before praying for with the Family: Having prayed, I now begun to look up, even that God would prepare me and them, as for personal Trials, so for Trials in Relations, vouchsafe his Presence in them, and gracious Supports under them; wherein, dear God, thou wast pleased, in some measure, to hear me; *Wherefore I will call upon thee so long as I live.* But after I had spent some time in enquiring into my Father's Circumstances, and desiring my Relations to bear up chearfully under God's Hand, telling them, that now we had an especial opportunity to exercise Faith and Patience, and that God's Eye was very narrowly fixed upon us, to observe our Carriage under this Trial: and what comfortable Reflections we might afterward have upon our Christian Carriage; afterward (I say) I begun to fear least I should err on the other Hand, by a too great Senselessness. So I betook my self to God

in

in Prayer, that he would sanctify this sad Stroak to me, shew me what my Sins had been, which had a hand in procuring of it, humble me for them, and fright me out of them. But presently after I discovered my Frame to grow worse, partly occasioned by seeing some of my Relations under Discouragements, and partly by suffering my own Heart by musing Thoughts to look too long on the dark side of the Cloud, by which means it became more dark, and unsatisfied, some discontented Thoughts arising, which I endeavoured in the bud to suppress, looking up to God for Help against them, and endeavouring what I could for that Night to lay aside all Thoughts of the Matter, and to compose my self to Sleep; which after a while I obtained, and in the Morning found my Spirit a little more composed, but still fearing least I should err on the hand before-mentioned, so I earnestly looked up to God, that he would direct into a right Medium, as to my Carriage; and having prayed with the Family as well as God enabled me, my Mother and I set out for this Town; but now alas! I begun to fear that the sight of my Father in a Prison would give my Affections too great advantage upon me, so as to get loose from me, which I endeavoured to arm my self against, and the Lord was pleased to help me to keep them under, finding my Father pretty well, and very chearful, and my Mother (who was got to him before me) much more cheary; tho she carried it beyond my expectation before. For that Day it pleased the Lord to keep my Heart in a pretty even Frame, which was a great part of it spent in being serviceable to my Father, helping him to such things as he wanted, that so his Condi-

on there might be as comfortable as I could make it, during his Confinement, which I expected would be no less than six Months. But still alas! I feared (as I had great cause) that I was not so sensible of the stroak, as wisely to improve it; but about three of the Clock that Day, as I was with him, Mr. Sheriff *H.* came to bring us the good News of his Release. The Goodness of God herein did I hope affect us all. But one thing I take special notice of is, a Friend of his that had been with us a little before, meeting him in the Streets observed, and (as I remember told him, however) related it to me, that he looked like one that was suddenly surprized; which makes me think, a Prison or any Suffering for Jesus Christ, is not so terrible as it is generally looked upon, but very tolerable, yea eligible to one that hath a good Conscience, and a warrantable Call; my poor Father seemed to be more chearful, to have his Heart more at ease when in Prison, than when he was Released, so now also my Fears begun to encrease, that the Lord's Work would not be done upon me. Ah Lord, how many smart Lashes doth my base Heart require, before Sin and Folly will out? Well, to thee I turn my self. Dear God, I would not that any shake of thy Rod towards me should be in vain. O that this may not be lost, wherein so much of thy Fatherly Tenderness doth appear. Thou hadst been just and righteous, if thou hadst whipt me to purpose, even till my Blood had trickled about my Heels; yea, I would still have acknowledged thee merciful and gracious, punishing me less than my Iniquities have deserved: But O methinks I hear thy Bowels sounding, thy Heart yearning towards
me

me in this Thing. Oh that mine may eccho back unto Thee ! Oh thou clod, thou lump of Earth, how do the very Stones in the Streets shame thee, which are warmed by the califying Beams of the Sun, but the influences of Heaven do little stir Thee ? Be ashamed and blush therefore oh my Soul, and herein accept of the Punishment of thine Iniquities, *and go and Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto Thee.* Now, dear God, I know thou art never at a want either of Time or Means to perform thy Pleasure ; perform thy whole Work upon my Soul, by this short Intimation of thy Displeasure, wherein yet so much of thy Fatherly Tenderness doth appear ; Oh suitably affect my Heart for his sake in whom alone I trust ! *Amen.*

C H A P. VIII.

A brief Character of him, written by his Father John Barrett.

IT may be presum'd, that his Manner of Conversation, even from a Child, must be fully known to me, as to any ; so that some Account may be expected from me here. Yet I find my self very unfit to write on this Subject, feeling in my self a weak and tender Part, ready to shrink, when I think of my great Loss ; and the Loss of others dear unto me. As when I have but glans'd a little at his Papers (some of which are herewith Publish'd) such a Tremor hath seized me, as forbad my perusal of (I being not so well able to bear these Things

now at present, or to dwell long upon them.) Wherefore they were put into the Hands of those my Reverend Brethren, who have view'd them, and taken Care to commit them to the Press. It hath not been without some kind of forcing my self, that I have now and then run over some of his Letters, I had from him.

Oh, what a rough, knotty Piece am I, who have need of such hewing at ; of such an heavy, cutting Stroke! Yet I would say, and resolve (as *Job*) *Though the Lord slay me, yet will I trust in him.* Yea, therefore the Lord hath taken away this Staff of my Old Age, to take me off from all Creature-Props, to depend on Him alone. Indeed I cannot but say, The Thing that I greatly feared, is come upon me. For several Years past, observing his Course and Motion, I was ready to conclude, he was near his Journeys End. Though in regard of my Age, together with more rooted bodily Distempers, others would rather have thought, I should have got home before him. But they think not, how far short I was of him in the Work of Preparation for Death. And though I have been in the World as long again as he was; yet I am questioning with my self, whether in a true Account, I have liv'd as much as he did in half the Time. Notwithstanding, his being taken away in the midst of his Days, and of his usefulness, is a thing that many (who knew him) cannot but lament together with me.

He was Born at *Sandivere* in the County of *Derby*, on *Aug. 2.* and Baptiz'd, *Aug. 13. Anno Dom. 1665.* Which was a Day of publick Fasting and Humiliation, with reference to the Plague, then raging in *London.* Which gave some

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some Occasion to his being named [*Joseph*] to acknowledge God's Goodness in adding to my Family, when He was making such dreadful Breaches in thousands of other Families.

He was hopeful in his Childhood. Observant of his Parents betimes, so tractable, that there was very rarely occasion to use, or threaten him with the Rod. I can scarce think, how Parents could have less trouble in Training up a Child, than we had with him.

He had a Love to his Book. And my thoughts were to have brought him up for the Ministry; but I perceiv'd a weakness in his sight. And for that Cause I put him upon the use of Spectacles before he was Thirty Years of Age, which he found a great help.

When it was Time to put him forth Apprentice, he desir'd, he might serve in *Nottingham* (to be near to his Parents, and among other Relations) rather than in *London*.

In his Apprenticeship he was for helping the other Servants forward in spiritual Things. Some of them, I hope, were getting good by his Means. On Lords Days (out of the Time of Publick Worship, and Family Duties) he would get such of his Fellow-Servants as he could together, to go over the Catechism with an Explication, which he had desir'd me to furnish him with. Writing of one of them, he hath this Passage, I hear to Day my poor Fellow-Servant is "worser (Pray, remember him) I fear, I shall never see him more: It troubleth me now, that I did no more for him, when he was with me; though I have some hopes, that he hath been growing more serious, since I knew him.

When any Day of Fasting and Humiliation was to be kept, he was very uneasie, if he might not be present the whole Time of Publick Exercises. Lords-Days and Fast-Days, and (before his Time was out) Sacrament-Days were Days of highest Account with him. And he kept up his esteem of them, they were High Days to him, even to his dying Day. It was grievous to him, when he had missed of one Sacrament, and very afflictive to him, if he found not present meltings of Heart for Sin, present quicknings, and exciting of Grace at every Sacrament he had Liberty to partake of ; in which Case he was earnestly longing for some After-fruits.

He kept close to Secret, Closet-Duties. He desired to be further instructed, and informed of his Duty, where he was in doubt, and at a stand. As he wrote to me, *Oct.* 7. 85. desiring to be Resolv'd, "*Whether it was his Duty* (under his present Circumstances, as he was then a Servant) "*frequently to set apart a competent Portion of Time, wherein to bind up* "*his Thoughts to some particular Subject? Adding,* "*About Two Years since I set to the Practice of it; but my untoward Heart did* "*then quite discourage me. And not questioning the Duty of occasional Meditation, that he ought to spiritualize his Thoughts, as much as he could. And farther granting against himself, that he could find Time for Reading, and for worse Things. After this, Oct.* 17. 85. Returning Thanks for some Satisfaction he had receiv'd, he hath another Thing to put to me (to get a further Discovery of Sin) *viz.* "*One Thing more I have oft desir'd to request of you, Scil.* That you would let me know what "*Sin*

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“ Sin it is, that you have most observed in me.
“ I know, you are in a Capacity above others
“ for this — O, do this for me, which I shall
“ take as a signal Instance of your Paternal Love.
“ It makes me sad sometimes, when I think of
“ my want of a Close, Home-Reprover.

While he was induc'd with great Patience,
to bear his own Troubles, Pains, Sicknefs; he
was deeply sympathizing with his Parents, when
afflicted. After a sore fit of Sicknefs, when he
was able to use his Pen, he wrote thus, “ I have
“ great Experience of Gods Goodness to me.
“ I have had violent Pains indeed, but then I
“ had Strength to bear them: When my Strength
“ failed, he took away my Pain. He never yet
“ over-dos'd his Patient. — May the Old Man
“ be brought lower, then I could bid this Affli-
“ ction welcome, with all my Heart.

But Writing to me, under some Illnefs, “ Your
“ Afflictions and Troubles go much nearer me,
“ than my own. — I could gladly put my
“ own Shoulder under in any Case, might it be
“ to ease you. *And in another Letter,* “ I can-
“ not but be afflicted in your Afflictions. But
“ blessed be God, I hope, he keeps our Best till
“ Last; and that this Last will never End. O
“ that by Faith and Hope we could all be doing
“ with it!

But this was a greater Comfort to me, that
he was a Mourner for the Sins of the Times,
and for the Churches Calamities, and the Suffer-
ings of any of Gods Saints and Servants, he
heard of.

When he was out of his Apprenticeship, he
was not forward to set up; but wrote to me
his Reasons against it, *March 10. 1685.* to wit,

" Thus I shall have a little more Time for the
 " settling of my Soul-concerns; being free from
 " abundance of worldly Cares, that I shall o-
 " therwise be involved in: And so be better
 " arm'd against those Temptations, I must ex-
 " pect to meet with ——— Again, for several
 " late Years I have not been in Expectation of a
 " long abode here. And if the Lord should
 " please in the mean Time to give me a Re-
 " move, then (as we say) the Thought is taken.
 " Again, if the Evils, that threatens us, should
 " come upon us ——— if Popery should be set up a-
 " mongst us, and the Lives of Gods dear Ser-
 " should be sacrific'd to the bloody Rage and
 " Cruelty of those Wicked Men; what good
 " would a Trade do me then; though I should
 " be never so prosperous, and go scot-free my
 " self? Yea, what good would my Life it self
 " do me? Let me rather suffer, and die with
 " them; and let others take the World, that
 " are fond of it. ——— And it is my earnest suit
 " to God, that he would make me more skilful
 " in Self-government. And it makes me a-
 " fraid of entring upon Family-Government,
 " while I am so imperfect in that

Some time after, he being to take a Journey
 to *Hull*, his Master kindly made this proffer,
 that if he would lay out any Money for him-
 self, he should have Room for the Goods, and
 the Profit to himself, while he stayed. And
 such was his Masters Respect and good Will
 towards him, that he had Liberty to Trade a
 little for himself, while he was with his Master
 (who doubted not in the least of his continu-
 ed Diligence, Fidelity and Upright-dealing.)
 As I hope, he never had Cause to repent of any
 Favor,

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Favor, or Kindness shewn towards him, nor does repent it to this Day.

Afterwards he was encouraged to take to a Family of his own. He Married a Wife, Mrs. *Millecent Reyner*, one of the Daughters of Mr. *John Reyner*, sometimes Fellow of *Emmanuel Colledge Cambrige*, my intimate Friend, whom I very much honour'd for his eminent Learning and Piety. He was the only Son of that choice Servant of Christ Mr. *Edward Reyner* of *Lincoln*. The Churches Loss was great in his being taken away so soon. Though (blessed be God) there are some eminent Ministers yet Living, that had the Benefit of his Tuition and Instructions. And I cannot think of one but made good Proof, under him. This Daughter of his (whose Mother also was a choice Christian) was both piously educated, and inclin'd, which was the great Motive, that drew my Thoughts, and my Son's towards Her. Her Mother would say, when they were little Children, that my *Joseph* should have her *Mille*. When both Parents were Dead, Providence brought this about. He left five young Children by her; (the Youngest of which (an Infant) the Lord hath since taken to himself.) He made more Account of the Ordinance of Baptism, than (I fear) many Professors do. I see in his Diary, he accounted it a great and solemn Work for a Christian Parent to offer and devote his Child unto God in that Ordinance. Such a "Lords-Day (says he) my "Child was Baptiz'd. I hope, it was the sincere Desire of my Soul to devote it to the "Lord, to renew my own Covenant with him, "and to take hold of the Covenant for my Child, "and put its Name into it ——— When

When he had a Wife, and Charge coming on, I could not discern, that the World got any more hold of him; but he sat as loose to worldly Things, as before. When he met with that, which some would have accounted a great Disappointment, he made very Light of it, writing thus, "I am well satisfied with what's done. I bless God, I find my Desires cooling to the World. O happy they, who have quite done with these Trifles! — O, methinks, how fast would I trip from all worldly Wealth, Honour, or Pleasure, to Heaven, if I could! O, how Happy are such, as have won so much of Christ in Christian Traffique here, that they are fit to Live upon him in Heaven! I would fain be Trading thus; and though my beginnings have been but small, yet O that my latter End may greatly increase!

One Year he had considerable Losses at Sea. The first an Hundred Pounds worth of Goods cast away with the Vessel; the latter, half so much (if I be not mistaken.) I find a Remark in his Diary, upon the former of these, such a Night, "I went to speak with a Friend, and being desir'd, went to Prayer with them. And blessed be God, my Heart was brought to a good Temper. And as I came home, I received the Tidings of my Loss. And the Lord having before-hand so garrison'd my Heart, I was not at all discompos'd by it.

And thus he wrote to me concerning it, *Sept.* 14. 1695. "I desire to bless God for his great goodness to me, in that I found it no surprize to me, nor hath my Spirit been disorder'd by it. It is my Prayer and Hope, that he will inable me so to carry it, that the World

"(if

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“ (if it will) may see, there is something more
“ in Religion to support one in such cases,
“ than they think of. And I hope, the Lord
“ will give me something which is better, in-
“ stead of that I have lost ; and do not questi-
“ on, but when he sees it good, he will make
“ it up in kind too.

Indeed, I could not but account God's Mercy greater far, in giving him such a calm and contented Frame under that and many other Losses (all which laid together, would rise to a considerable Sum) I thought him far happier, than if he had gained double and triple to all his Losses in the World.

Many that conversed most, and was best acquainted with him (I suppose) took him to be very exemplary for his Care in governing his Tongue: Tho ordinarily he was of few words, yet his Lips were feeding many.

He had a free Heart, was at all times ready to contribute to pious and charitable Uses, according to, if not beyond his Ability. He took pleasure in the exercise of Charity, and “ looked on that little Pittance, he had given this
“ way (as he said) as the safest part of his
“ Estate. He thought, they that came to col-
“ lect it, were more welcome to him, than if
“ they had been some of his best Customers.

He was not so much for worldly as for spiritual Projects ; and would own it, as God's great Mercy, with humble Thankfulness, when these took, that he had Success. I meet with this Passage in his Diary : “ The Lord hath
“ been pleased to put a blessed Project into
“ my Head — of doing good to many a Soul.
“ It doth me good to think of it. O, but I
“ fear,

“ fear, lest my Sins should provoke the Lord to
 “ blast it.

And some time after he noteth, “ Some com-
 “ fortible Tokens of Success of the Gospel at a
 “ place in the *Peak* ; which I suppose may have
 reference to the forementioned Project.

He was forward to subscribe and promote
 Subscriptions towards the maintenance of young
 Scholars, that were hopeful: As writing to
 me for one (who is since grown up, and at
 work, likely to be a very useful Man, a Bless-
 ing in his Generation) “ Methinks, one might
 “ put out a little Money here to good Interest.
 “ For my own part, I take it to be a likely op-
 “ portunity of laying out a little Money to ad-
 “ vantage.

So he was laying out himself to promote the
 setting up of Lectures in dark places. And in
 his last Sickness, I could not but take notice,
 how he rejoiced in Spirit, hoping the Lord was
 opening a Door in one place, for which he was
 last concern'd. He spake of the Matter to me
 in that lively, chearful manner, with such a
 pleasant Look, as if he had been in perfect
 Health. When he had no sooner ended that
 Discourse, but I could discern a flagging of Spi-
 rits: He had a violent Fever, of which he died
 on Lord's Day, *August* 28. early in the Morn-
 ing : A Day which he so prized, and conscien-
 tiously observed in his Life-time ; on which he
 entred upon the everlasting Sabbath.

In *February*, *Anno Dom.* 94. he was brought
 very low with a nervous Consumption : yet it
 pleased the Lord to give a lifting up, beyond and
 contrary to the Expectation of many. His ma-
 ny Sicknesses, and often Infirmities (I doubt not)
 were

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were sanctified, and in Mercy to him, a good means to quicken him to serve God and his Generation (according to his Capacity) and to prepare him for a better Life.

Not long before he was called out of the World, he took in a Partner to lessen his Care and Cumber in the World. In his last Sickness I heard a judicious Person say of him, how active he had been, and that without making any Noise. *Now blessed are the Dead that die in the Lord, they rest from their Labours, they enter into the Joy of their Lord, and their Works follow them.*

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